THE GREAT MASTERS IN THE LOUVRE GALLERY

FIRST VOLUME

NEW YORK D. APPLETON & CO.

PARIS: GOUPIL & CO., ART PUBLISHERS

(JEAN BOUSSOD, MANZI, JOYANT & CO.)

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MODERN SCHOOL

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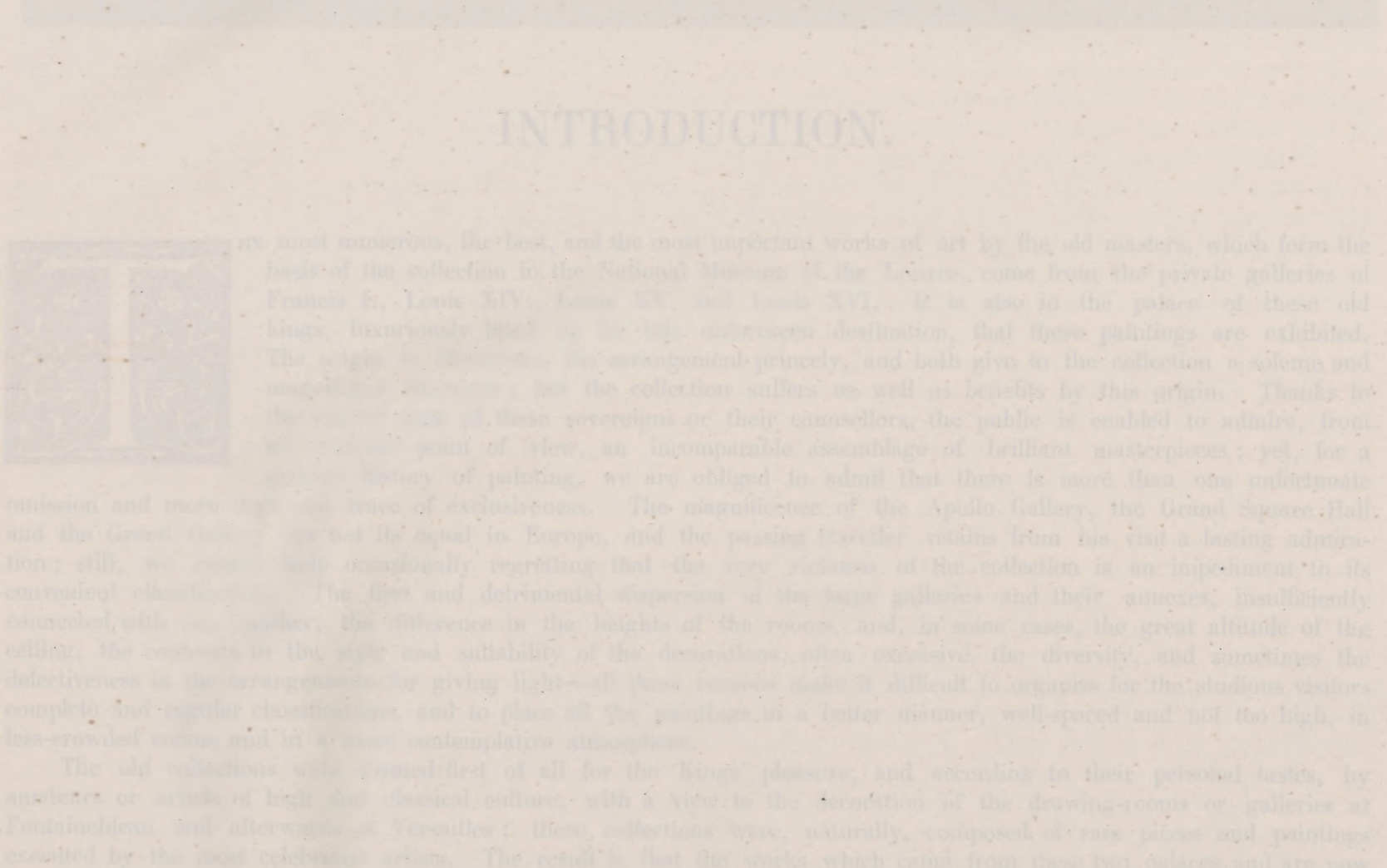

INTRODUCTION.

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THE most numerous, the best, and the most important works of art by the old masters, which form the basis of the collection in the National Museum of the Louvre, come from the private galleries of Francis I., Louis XIV., Louis XV. and Louis XVI. It is also in the palace of these old kings, luxuriously fitted up for this unforeseen destination, that these paintings are exhibited. The origin is illustrious, the arrangement princely, and both give to the collection a solemn and magnificent character ; but the collection suffers as well as benefits by this origin. Thanks to the refined taste of these sovereigns or their counsellors, the public is enabled to admire, from an esthetic point of view, an incomparable assemblage of brilliant masterpieces ; yet, for a general history of painting, we are obliged to admit that there is more than one unfortunate omission and more than one trace of exclusiveness. The magnificence of the Apollo Gallery, the Grand Square Hall and the Grand Gallery has not its equal in Europe, and the passing traveller retains from his visit a lasting admiration ; still, we cannot help occasionally regretting that the very richness of the collection is an impediment to its convenient classification. The first and detrimental dispersion of the large galleries and their annexes, insufficiently connected with one another, the difference in the heights of the rooms, and, in some cases, the great altitude of the ceiling, the contrasts in the style and suitability of the decorations, often excessive, the diversity, and sometimes the defectiveness in the arrangements for giving light—all these reasons make it difficult to organise for the studious visitors complete and regular classifications, and to place all the paintings in a better manner, well-spaced and not too high, in less-crowded rooms and in a more contemplative atmosphere.

The old collections were formed first of all for the Kings' pleasure, and according to their personal tastes, by amateurs or artists of high and classical culture, with a view to the decoration of the drawing-rooms or galleries at Fontainebleau and afterwards at Versailles ; these collections were, naturally, composed of rare pieces and paintings executed by the most celebrated artists. The result is that the works which came from these two palaces and are now at the Louvre, constitute a small but rare and striking series of superior and incomparable masterpieces of the brilliant and powerful maturity of the schools then in vogue of Italy, Flanders, Holland and France. It is thus that almost all the greatest masters in the art of painting :—Andrea Mantegna, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Correggio, Titian, Paul Veronese, Rubens, Jordaens, Van Dyck, Rembrandt, Claude Lorraine, Poussin—present themselves triumphantly in splendid and important works, without the study of which we should insufficiently know, even in their own countries, their strength or the diversity of their genius. It is only in the long run, and if we seek in the presence of these paintings the origin or the influences of these conducting geniuses, that our modern curiosity—more eager for delicate and varied joys, more broadened by travel and sharpened by critical knowledge than that of our genial ancestors, who were less informed and more sedentary—is astonished at not always finding in the Louvre satisfactory replies to its legitimate questionings. The art of the fifteenth century, especially, so original and so varied, so sincere and so poetical, neglected or disdained too long by fashionable or scholastic prejudices, has not yet, even for Italy and Flanders, still less for France and Germany, regained its great and rightful place in our national museum. For other and more recent schools, those of Spain and England, the omissions are still more deplorable, for they include some of the least disputable painters, and even some of the most illustrious masters.

It is not because most of the curators since the beginning of the century—from Denon, the first and experienced Director of Museums, whose intelligent eclecticism saved and defended so many masters then out of fashion—have not

endeavoured to remedy this state of things; but they have nearly always encountered the indifference or incompetency of the public powers, vaguely sustained by a national prejudice. The aristocratic idea that an art museum is simply a place of noble recreation and temporary elevation for minds of general culture and, at the most, of high and traditional teaching for artists already formed, the patriotic conviction, more vain than reasonable, that the Louvre would always remain, in spite of everything, the finest art museum in Europe, persisted and dominated in France at that moment; whilst larger and more fruitful opinions, expressed by such Frenchmen as Léon Delaborde, Villot, Prosper Mérimée, Viollet-le-Duc and Charles Blanc, already shone abroad and made the tour of the world.

The arrangement and classification at the Louvre Palace of the paintings that had become national property as a consequence of the Revolution, and the definite setting apart of this palace as a General and Central Art Museum, decreed as early as 1790, really took place only three years later. The first halls were opened to the public on the 18th Brumaire of the Year II. (November 8, 1794). The idea of exhibiting masterpieces of art in these sumptuous surroundings was, besides, not a new one; it originated with royalty itself. Already, in the reign of Louis XIV., in 1681, Colbert had, for the first time, brought together at the Louvre the paintings of the royal collection. This exhibition, organised by the painter Le Brun, was to become, according to his notion and that of Colbert, a museum open for study. Unfortunately, the King and his courtiers did not cease to pick out of the collection for the ornamentation of their apartments, just as they would from a furniture repository. After the death of the great minister and the great painter their idea was forgotten by their successors. "In 1727," says M. Babeau, in his excellent book on the Louvre, "it was always permissible to ask to see the paintings, but they were in such poor order that the request was rarely made. In 1714 many of them were packed in wardrobes."

During the whole of the eighteenth century, notwithstanding the costly constructions of the colonnades and north wings, suddenly left in suspense, the old palace of Francis I. and Henry IV., abandoned for Versailles and the Tuileries, was no longer to serve only as lodgings for artists or savants pensioned by the Court, as offices for certain privileged companies or establishments, such as the Royal Printing Office, the Cabinet and Studio of Medals, the Print and Engraving Rooms, the offices of the *Gazette de France* newspaper, and the various French Academies: Inscriptions and Medals, Sciences, Architecture, Painting and Sculpture.

The Grand Gallery, the only one where the decorative work was continued, was at first reserved for the pictures of living artists who were members of the Academy. It is there that were held the Salons of 1699 and 1704; but in 1706 this gallery, even, was given to the War Office for its relief plans of the principal fortified cities in France, and the Salons were interrupted. When they were renewed in a regular manner, in 1737, the exhibition of the works of living artists was held in the Grand Hall (which is to-day called the Square Hall), and this room sufficed for them until the Revolution; it continued to be their principal gallery of honour, even after the Salons became annual, and the works, more and more numerous, crowded on to the landings and adjacent stairways, that is to say, from 1791 to 1848.

It is regrettable that a complete inventory or catalogue of this first exhibition of the King's private collection, in 1681, has not been preserved for us, because we should find in it some precious information. All that we know comes from the account of the inauguration published by the *Mercure Galant*, and which tells us that a large number of these paintings bore the signatures of the greatest masters. "The visitors admired sixteen paintings by Raphael, six by Correggio, five by Giulio Romano, ten by Leonardo da Vinci, eight by Giorgione, four by the old Palma, twenty-three by Titian, nineteen by Carracci, eight by Domenichino, twelve by Guido, six by Tintoretto, eighteen by Paul Veronese, fourteen by Van Dyck, seventeen by Poussin, six by M. Le Brun, some of which are forty feet long."

Among the masterpieces of the sixteenth century, several had belonged to the royal family since the time of Francis I., who had bought them directly from the great artists, his contemporaries; in the series were *The Virgin with the Rocks, Saint John the Baptist, La Gioconda,* by Leonardo da Vinci; *The Holy Family, Saint Michael, Sainte Margaret,* the portrait of *John of Aragon*, by Raphael; *Charity* and *The Holy Family* by Andrea del Sarto; the two last-mentioned works were painted in France. All these paintings, with many others, gathered together by Charles IX., in 1565, in a high-studded room in the Pavilion at the palace of Fontainebleau, formed the celebrated collection that was called the Cabinet of Paintings, where all the French artists went to instruct themselves and exercise their hand for more than a century.

However, the greater number of paintings consisted of private purchases made by Louis XIV., whose hereditary passion for art was marvellously encouraged and seconded by the active, enterprising, methodical and persistent genius of the incomparable Colbert. As soon as the young king obtained power, he renewed, with Colbert's aid and his own accustomed decision, but with more order and extended means, the interrupted work of his predecessor, Francis I. At his accession, in 1643, the royal collection consisted only of 200 paintings; at his death, in 1715, it contained 2,000, or a number equal to, or greater than, that of the united works at the present day in most of the largest public galleries in Europe. Thus, the Dresden Museum, which is the richest one after the Louvre, counts only 2,475 numbers in its catalogue; the Prado, at Madrid, 2,205; the Imperial and Royal Museum, at Vienna, 1,797; the Hermitage, at St. Petersburg, 1,565; the Uffizi Gallery, at Florence, 1,308; the Pitti Gallery, in the same city, 497; the Berlin Museum, 1,617; the National Gallery, at London, 1,363; the Royal Museum, at Amsterdam, 2,000; that at The Hague, 600; the Brussels Museum, 500; the Antwerp Museum, about 1,600. The National Museum of the Louvre, therefore, keeps the head with 2,752 paintings that it can show; but these paintings are selected from among a much larger number of works that figure on its official list, most of which are loaned to the provincial museums or temporarily placed in other national palaces, especially at Fontainebleau and Compiègne.

From the year 1681, the important purchases that were to assure to the French collection its brilliancy and supremacy in the present and future, had been adroitly made by Colbert. In 1661, after the death of Cardinal Mazarin, the King bought from his heirs for the sum of 224,573 francs, 546 paintings (283 Italian, 77 German, Flemish, Dutch, 77 French, and 109 of various schools), without speaking of 92 copies and 241 portraits of Popes, counted apart. The larger number of these paintings came from the collection of King Charles I., sold in London after his death, and pur-

chased by Jabach, the celebrated Cologne financier, then established in Paris. The King of England had himself bought them from the Duke of Mantua, for whose collection he paid £80,000. They were nearly all remarkable works, and are still the just pride of our national museum. Ten years later, in 1671, when Jabach, ruined by his prodigality, was obliged to sell what remained of his paintings and the larger part of his collection of drawings, Louis XIV. bought them for 200,000 francs.

The 5,512 drawings formed the first and most important series of the Collection of Drawings, which was immediately placed in the palace of the Louvre, where it has always remained, and which to-day numbers more than 40,000 pieces.

Unfortunately, as we have seen, the exhibition of 1681 in the Louvre Palace lasted only for a time, and then the paintings went to ornament the apartments at Versailles, or other residences, from which they were to return slowly and with difficulty. In 1750, however, after numerous requests from artists, men of letters and amateurs, Louis XV. decided that a selection should be made among the paintings and that the most celebrated works should be placed in one of the royal edifices in Paris. The Marquis of Marigny, taking up a project of his predecessor, M. de Tournehem, had the paintings disposed in a part of the Luxemburg Palace, near the Medici Gallery, painted by Rubens. This new museum, which was intended as a place of study for young artists, could be visited twice a week, on Wednesday and Saturday. Only the top of the basket had been sent, 110 paintings of different schools. Several of these pictures being in a lamentable state were transferred from wood to canvas by a process then new, that was invented by M. Picault.

It was in 1775 that the Marquis of Marigny's successor, the Count of Angivillier, conceived the happy idea of uniting in the Grand Gallery along the side of the Seine, for the creation of a vast museum, the finest works of art of all kinds possessed by the Crown. For this purpose he began by removing to the Invalides all the plans and models of the fortified cities; but he encountered so many obstacles and so much opposition in the accomplishment of his project that he was unable to succeed. The public was also deprived at that moment of the permanent exhibition at the Luxemburg Palace, which was closed for the purpose of making new changes, and the paintings were sent back to Versailles and once more scattered throughout the various apartments. An inventory made by the painter Durameau, with sketches indicating the places on the walls of the drawing-rooms and chambers, has preserved for us the curious souvenir of this last and deplorable exile of these paintings, which the Revolution alone, but not without difficulty, was to terminate.

There is nothing more exciting, interesting, and at times touching, than the history of the Louvre Palace and the art collections accumulated therein during the Revolution, the Consulate and the Empire (1793-1815). In the course of those twenty-two years there were continual arrivals, unpackings, and temporary or definite exhibitions of paintings coming from France or from foreign countries, by reason of purchases, gifts, confiscations or conquests; the succession of removals, enlargements, embellishments, inaugurations and changes is difficult to follow, and sometimes even exactly to determine, from the documents in the archives, the catalogues and newspapers of the time.

On the 26th of August, 1791, the Constituant Assembly designated the Louvre Palace for works of letters and art. In the following years the Legislative Assembly and the Convention appointed committee after committee to organise and arrange this vast national museum. Barrère, especially, showed praiseworthy zeal in frequently raising the question. In the month of November, 1793, the French Museum, or Central Museum of the Arts, was finally opened to the public. The paintings, pell-mell with the works of sculpture and art objects, were temporarily exhibited in the Grand Gallery, cut and divided into seventeen bays so as to give more wall space. The catalogue mentioned 537 pictures. In the following year the number was increased by taking from the Versailles Palace some paintings that Durameau had still kept there. The managing board of the Museum of the Louvre—or Conservatory, as these trustees were then called—created by a decree of the 27th Nivose, Year II. (January 16, 1794), was composed of Fragonard, Bonvoisin, Wicar, Dupasquier, Delannoy, Picault, Varon and Lesueur, nearly all painters and former pupils at the French Academy at Rome. Picault was the son of the renovator who had shown his skill in 1750. This managing board, which was remarkably active and competent, at once demanded a certain number of improvements, such as the lighting of the rooms from overhead, the opening of separate galleries for sculpture and painting, the organisation at the Louvre of a special and public library of books of art and prints. It is owing to the energy of these trustees that the paintings retained at Versailles, which are the most precious ones of the old collection, were finally added to those already at the Louvre. It was also by the care of the trustees that the Grand Hall, repaired, became as early as 1796 an international and comparative hall of honour, wherein were placed near to one another some masterpieces of divers schools.

On February 6, 1798, the Italian paintings from Parma, Plaisance, Milan, Cremona, Modena, Cento and Bologna, ceded to France by the treaty of Tolentino and the armistice of Parma and Bologna, arrived at the Louvre; on November 8, 1799, came those from Venice, Verona, Mantua, Pesaro, Fano, Loreto and Rome; on March 9, 1800, those from Florence and Rome; in 1806 and 1807, those from Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Some of these paintings did not remain long in Paris, and were, under the Consulate and Empire, added to others from French collections to form twenty-eight museums in the large cities of the Republic or of the Empire, among which were then comprised those of Belgium and Holland, the Rhenish provinces and Italy. It is in this way that the museums at Brussels and Mayence, among others, were enriched by important works that are still admired there to-day. In other cases exchanges were made. In 1812, for example, the Brera Museum, at Milan, received in exchange for some works by Beltraffio, Carpaccio, Moretto, Marco da Oggiono, several masterpieces by northern masters who were not yet represented at Milan: Rubens, Jordaens, Van Dyck and Rembrandt. We might cite many other examples of these regular exchanges, in which the curators of the Louvre always follow the fundamental idea, adopted at the very beginning of the museum, that a public museum of painting, to be thoroughly instructive, ought to be an historical museum, and exhibit side by side the most interesting, significant and diverse manifestations of the art of painting in all countries and of all epochs.

It was in 1810 that the Napoleonic Museum spread before the dazzled eyes of the world the ephemeral splendour of its incredible riches. The catalogue comprised 1,233 numbers, which, for the most part were masterpieces of the

highest rank, chosen with an intelligent enthusiasm by French agents throughout Europe. The Raphaels were: the *Madonna of the Chair,* the *Vision of Ezechiel, The Transfiguration,* the *Five Saints*, the *Coronation of the Virgin*, the *Madonna of Foligno,* the portraits of *Leo X., Cardinal Inghirami, Cardinal Bibbiena,* etc.; the Rubenses were: a *Descent from the Cross,* the *Miraculous Draught,* the *Saint Bavon*, the *Communion of Saint Francis,* the *Crucifixion* (called, also, the *Lance Stroke*), etc., and so on for all the other great masters.

These marvels were preserved in the Grand Gallery throughout the Empire; it is there, we may assert, that was formed our modern school of French painting—romanticist, colourist, naturalist and decorative—for it is there that Géricault, Delacroix and Bonington received their first, youthful or childish impressions, and there that they made their first studies. All the 1830 School lived on the souvenir and regret of the Napoleonic Museum.

In 1816 the sword reconquered what the sword had won, and the larger part of the paintings brought by the armies of the Republic and the Empire, were taken back to Italy, the Netherlands and Germany by the armies of the Holy Alliance. A small number, by means of agreements and exchanges, remained in France. To fill the enormous vacancies that this sudden taking-away had left in the Louvre, there were brought from the Luxemburg Palace the series of canvases painted by Rubens for Mary of Medici, those representing the Life of Saint Bruno by Le Sueur, and those of the French ports by Joseph Vernet. The interior fittings remained as they were, and but few modifications were made during the reigns of Louis XVIII., Charles X. and Louis Philippe, who spent very little money on the Louvre. Louis XVIII. bought 111 paintings in nine years; Charles X. 24 in six years; but Louis Philippe, entirely absorbed by the creation of the Historical Museum at Versailles, sent to the Louvre only 33 paintings in eighteen years.

The most important and the most decisive of the changes, enlargements and embellishments that have given to the Louvre its present magnificent aspect, are due to the Second Republic (1848-1852), which, in less than three years, under the active direction of the architect Duban, restored and decorated the Gallery of Apollo, the Gallery of the Seven Chimneys, the Grand Square Hall, the Grand Gallery, on the side of the Seine, and the Colonnade Galleries. The Second Empire (1852-1870), soon added the Gallery of the Seven Meters (a room that takes its name from its length), in which are placed the Italian Primitives; the five transverse galleries, between the Grand Gallery and the Mollien Landing, containing the Dutch Primitive Schools, the German and English Schools, and the paintings by Le Sueur; the two large halls of the French Schools (seventeenth and eighteenth century masters), with the Denon Hall, now the Gallery of Portraits, which separates them. The Third Republic by completely changing and lighting the first of the States Hall (Hall VIII., devoted to French paintings of the nineteenth century), has enabled the management to show by the side of the ancient schools the richness and strength of the modern and contemporaneous French School. The work at present under way in the second States Hall, following the Grand Gallery, will doubtless soon admit of more freely developing in a vast nave, with small side halls, the series of the Rubens decorative pieces and the small Flemish and Dutch paintings that are now crowded in the Grand Gallery.

Such as it is, notwithstanding some omissions easy to repair and some temporary defects in arrangement, the Museum of Painting at the Louvre offers one of the most splendid and instructive collections of masterpieces that can be studied and admired in any place in the world. Nowhere, as we have said, even in their own countries, are a certain number of superior masters—Mantegna, Leonardo da Vinci, Titian, Correggio, Paul Veronese, Rubens, Van Dyck, Rembrandt and some others, without speaking of the French masters, Poussin, Claude Lorraine, Le Sueur, David, Ingres, Delacroix—more nobly and more abundantly represented; it is necessary to come to Paris to know them thoroughly. We may say the same for many of the minor masters. The magnificence of the surroundings, which remains a legitimate attraction for the general public is, in reality, justified by the quality of the works exhibited, and seems only a just and traditional homage rendered to their impressive beauty.

GEORGES LAFENESTRE.

Theodore Rousseau.

A Stormy Sky.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

THE LOUVRE GALLERY.

THE MODERN SCHOOL.

It is not long since the French artists of the School of 1830 were first admitted to the Louvre.

The public collections in France are regulated by such rigid decrees and rules that the men who distinguished themselves in art under its many aspects during the most fruitful years of this century were left waiting in the galleries of Versailles and of the Luxembourg, and even more often in private collections, till death had claimed them. Nor was this all : not until ten years had elapsed from the date of his death could an artist's work be admitted to the great National Museum.

Indeed, it was not until the end of the year 1886 that the *Salle des États*, after being remodelled and redecorated by M. Edmond Guillaume, architect of the Louvre, enabled M. de Tauzia, the Curator of the Paintings, Drawings and Engravings, to make a first classification of the School of 1830, which, thanks to subsequent gifts and purchases, now presents a fairly complete general idea of all that school aimed at and achieved.

In 1869, M. Louis Lacaze, by his will, dated November 24th of that year, bequeathed to the Louvre a collection of pictures, "in the hope that the State might reserve a room for the collection." These two hundred and seventy-five pictures given by M. Louis Lacaze included only a choice of French

painters of the eighteenth century, besides some works of the old masters, the School of 1830 not being to the taste of that eminent collector.

Thus the *Salle des États* was the first to be opened to the modern French masters. It contains eighty-eight examples, which, excepting about ten, are all by the followers of the movement of 1830.

The artist who fills the chief place is Eugène Delacroix, who was born at Charenton in 1798, and died at Paris in 1863; he is designated by the curators of the Louvre as the head of the Romantic School, and very truly described by Baudelaire, as "a giant among artists, a supernatural colourist, indefatigable in rendering the most daring conceptions of literature and the most stirring dramas of history."

"Delacroix, lac de sang, hanté des mauvais anges,
Ombragé par un bois de sapins toujours verts,
Où, sous un ciel chagrin, des fanfares étranges
Passent comme un soupir étouffé de Weber."

"What are we to say of Delacroix's drawing," writes the poet of *Les Fleurs du Mal*, "of the drawing that has been so absurdly, so idiotically criticised, except that there are certain elementary truths which are completely misunderstood: that good drawing does not mean a hard, relentless, despotic, unyielding outline, enclosing a form like a strait-jacket; that drawing ought, like nature, to show life and movement; that the simplification of drawing is a monstrosity, the same as tragedy in the dramatic world; that nature gives us an infinite variety of curved, indefinite and broken lines, thus following an impeccable law of generation, where parallel lines and surfaces are always vague and sinuous, where concavity and roundness of form harmonize and follow each other."

The earliest painting by Delacroix in the *Salle des États* is the *Dante and Virgil in Hell,* exhibited in the Salon of 1822. Everyone knows this picture. Virgil is standing in the middle of a boat wrapped in a red robe, a wreath of laurels on his head, while Dante, in a hood, gazes with a movement of horror on the damned who are writhing in the waves lighted up by the flames of Hell. The gestures of the figures, including that of the boatman who is steering the poets, are startlingly dramatic in effect.

A tradition says that the torso of the figure in the foreground, facing the spectator, was painted by Géricault; but Delacroix in his correspondence makes no mention of this aid.

Whether or no Géricault had any hand in the work, there can be no doubt that *Dante and Virgil in Hell* was the outcome of the stimulating friendship between the two artists. We have only to look at the *Wreck of the Medusa* and to remember that both these men, who were great readers, were captivated in the highest degree by what may be described as "incandescent literature."

The Louvre has also a picture by Delacroix that came from the Luxembourg, the *Massacre at Chios,* which was bought at the Salon of 1824. In this work the painter shows a more marked individuality than in the *Virgil and Dante.*

"The maiden," wrote Paul de Saint-Victor, "who in this picture is borne off by a cavalier, assumes in the midst of such a scene of horror the sanctity of an allegory. It is Greece, stripped, profaned and struggling against her oppressor."

In truth, as we stand before this scene, depicted with such incisive and emphatic vividness, we are carried back to the enthusiasm which fired every breast at the time when the Greeks were fighting with heroic courage for their freedom. The group of wounded stoically awaiting death, the child climbing up to its mother's breast, the haggard eye of the terrified woman as she sees the Turkish horseman about to fell a soldier who clings to his saddle while he drags the imploring girl at his charger's tail—nothing strikes us as exaggerated, and in fact nothing is forced.

Eugene Delacroix.
Algerian Women.

The Massacre at Chios was the first of a long series of the dramas treated by Delacroix with indifference to technique and with the single purpose of impressing the very heart of the subject on the spectator's mind. As to the contempt for simplicity of line which Baudelaire praises, it is, in fact, the weak side of the painter of the *Massacre at Chios*. The sound rings out; the colour is eloquent; the lines too often say nothing. But what may not be forgiven to the marvellous improviser, to the incomparable executant who summed up the revolution of 1830 in his picture of *Liberty Guiding the People* ?

On a partly-demolished barricade, strewn with dead and wounded, Liberty, a half-nude female figure wearing the Phrygian cap and holding a gun in one hand and a tricolour flag in the other, looks round to

encourage the combatants. On the right a boy, the Paris street Arab, flourishes a pair of pistols; on the left a citizen hugs his musket with frenzy; the populace follow in the rear, armed with swords. The city is symbolised by the towers of Notre Dame, and a battle is suggested by the charge of a cavalry regiment. This scene is full of absorbing interest.

The citizen in his now old-fashioned garb may be almost ludicrous, the boy's attitude may seem extravagant; but the composition is arranged with so much skill and the execution is so powerful under the thin disguise of an ingenious allegory, that it is easy to understand why Delacroix, in 1857, when canvassing for his election to the Paris Academy of Fine Arts, and finding men deeply moved by representations of contemporary events, should mention, as one of his titles to the suffrages of his future colleagues, the only work in which he has depicted modern costume.

Liberty Guiding the People is so grand a picture that although Charlet—an orthopædic draughtsman—confessed he could not understand it, Daumier, of whom the Louvre has no example, admired it, and Raffet regarded it as the finest of masterpieces.

It may here be remarked that the Louvre ought to make such a place as they deserve for the two last-named artists. One quarter of the space occupied by a canvas of M. Lethière's would be enough to satisfy public opinion, which is beginning to do justice to Daumier, and rightly regards Raffet as one of the glories of our age.

Yet places of honour have been assigned to Devéria, whose *Birth of Henri IV.* gave rise to hopes that were never fulfilled, and to M. Heim, the fine draughtsman who designed the *Distribution of Rewards in the Presence of Charles X.* Apart from any comparison with these men, the affected compositions of M. Paul Delaroche, the pretentious efforts of M. Ary Scheffer and the silly productions of M. Léopold Robert encumber the *Salle des États;* these painters belong to no school, they express nothing and teach nothing, and it is the bounden duty of the curators of the Louvre to give to Daumier and Raffet, each in his way a marked individuality, the place they are still waiting for.

When speaking of the Delacroixs in the Louvre, mention must first be made of the ceiling of the Galerie d'Apollon. To describe this fine work we cannot do better than quote Delacroix himself, and reprint the notice he distributed when the painting was first uncovered.

"Apollo in his chariot had already spent half his darts. His sister Diana, flying to meet him, offers him her quiver. The blood-stained monster, already pierced by the shafts of the god of life and heat, writhes as he exhales his last breath and his impotent rage in a fiery blast. The waters of the deluge are subsiding, and leaving on the hill-tops or carrying in their tide the bodies of men and beasts. The gods are wroth to see the earth given over to shapeless reptiles, the foul offspring of the slime; they have taken arms. Apollo, Minerva, Mercury rush to exterminate the monsters while waiting for eternal Wisdom to repeople the solitude of the world. Hercules fells them with his club; Vulcan, the god of fire, drives night and its vapours before him, while Boreas and the Zephyrs dry up the waters with their breath, and finally dispel the clouds. The river nymphs have returned to their bed of reeds, and found their urn still smirched with mud and wreckage. Other more timid divinities stand apart to watch the battle of the gods and the elements. Meanwhile Victory descends from the empyrean to crown conquering Apollo, and Iris, the messenger of the gods, displays her scarf in the air, a symbol of triumph and light defeating darkness and the rebellious waters."

It is said that Delacroix, while painting this ceiling, became imbued with the theory of colour in shadow, as observed by the Impressionists, and, having proved to his own satisfaction that it was correct, proceeded to adopt it. In truth, however, it would be ungracious to assert that the great master did indeed apply a theory which he did not understand. It is better for us to admire the wonderful spirit of the composition, its fine arrangement, and above all the splendid effect of the radiant light which proceeds from the centre, illuminates every part of the picture, and gives it the unity of purpose which we seek in vain in the finest decorative painting by Rubens.

Besides this great piece, the Louvre has wisely borrowed from the Versailles galleries the *Entry of the Crusaders into Constantinople.* It has always been a matter of surprise that the Gobelins Tapestry Works never reproduced this picture, as it would certainly have been one of the finest products of the State looms.

There is no more epic composition in all Delacroix's work. The painter, who had spent a long time in Morocco studying the East, could alone give to the panorama of old Stamboul and to the Bosphorus winding in broad reaches behind the Princes of the West, within sight now of the goal of their dreams, the peculiarly oriental stamp that characterises this picture. If Lebrun, the painter who

Eugene Delacroix.
Don Juan's Boat.

has depicted scenes from the wars of Alexander and Darius under the dull sky of Flanders, had seen this painting by Delacroix, he would not have hesitated to order a permanent reproduction in tapestry of this brilliant presentment of one of the most extraordinary achievements in the history of mankind. Nay, he would have done more. He would have gone himself to verify the truth of the study, and who knows whether his prodigious powers might not have been influenced thereby?

With all due respect to the professed Orientalists—I mean more especially Decamps and Marilhat—Lebrun was an artist of penetrating insight. He went to the heart of things instead of being satisfied with the surface, and he would undoubtedly have given us more of the essence of the East than those I have named, in whom fierce contrasts of colour cannot wholly disguise poverty of design.

There remains, however, a matter of dispute in questions of art which will be constantly recurring

until the end of time, and in which strong arguments are advanced by those who hold opposite views.

When an artist composes a picture, represents a scene, or paints a portrait, ought he to start with a preconceived notion of the aspect he wishes to give the subject of his work, or should he not rather be the slave of his observation of nature and never deviate from that?

In my opinion either view may be maintained in argument; but what is certainly inadmissible is the entire suppression by studio work of the conception derived from nature.

In this respect Delacroix, while bent on moulding his subject to his own idea, always revealed a fidelity to his impressions, which is manifest in all he did, especially in the *Algerian Women,* in the *Jewish Wedding in Morocco,* and even in *Don Juan's Boat.*

Nothing can be more profound than the impression made by this party of *Algerian Women* grouped in a room of the harem, its walls hung with "azulejos," where they recline at their ease in their magni-

ficent costumes. In the picture of the *Jewish Wedding,* the intense sunshine, subdued by an awning stretched across at the level of the first floor, floods with diffused rays a vivid scene in the inner court of an Arab dwelling. Finally, *Don Juan's Boat,* alone in the waste of ocean and tossed by the storm, while the unhappy shipwrecked wretches stare with fascinated gaze at a vacant and hopeless horizon, is a work of absolute sincerity in the rendering of a scene once witnessed.

It may, then, be asserted that this great artist, who will stand alone in the history of art during the present century, devoid of influence on those who would imitate or follow him, was never false to the respect due to nature, while yet giving free play to the fertility of his genius.

That Rubens was his ancestor, that he was influenced by Géricault, are facts not to be denied, but he is always strongly personal; however daring, abnormal and erratic his audacity as a colourist or his defects as a draughtsman may appear, we are always aware of his intense respect for his first apprehension of truth, combined with a determination to express the thing he seeks to convey.

In speaking of the "art movement" of 1830 we must consider, even before we enter on a study of the works of Delacroix, those of M. Ingres, whose strong convictions had, and still preserve, a dominating influence on the destinies of French art.

But I must postpone any discussion of the painter of the *Apotheosis of Homer* and deal first with the landscape painters of the School of 1830—Theodore Rousseau, Corot and Daubigny—with animal painters such as Troyon and Brascassat, and the well-known names of Millet, Fromentin, Diaz, Courbet and Regnault, though M. Ingres has left the mark of his authority in various degrees on most of these artists.

To begin with the landscape painters, Theodore Rousseau was the one whose first appearance was, beyond all doubt, the most brilliant and resounding.

Theodore Rousseau, born in Paris in 1812, was a pupil of Guillaume Guiblon-Lethière, the very type of a mediocre artist overwhelmed throughout his life with official favours. Member of the Institute, Professor at the École des Beaux-Arts, Director of the French Academy at Rome, Lethière worked in every style, painting history, portraits and landscape with equal facility.

Theodore Rousseau was strongly impressed by the English school of landscape painting, and left Lethière's studio to retire to a country house he had acquired at Barbizon, near Fontainebleau. There he devoted himself to the study of nature, sending pictures to the annual Salons from 1834 to 1848, though most of them were rejected. He delighted especially in covering his canvas with large masses of trees bathed in light under a sky of fleecy clouds and mirrored in pools of water reflecting the dying glow of the sun or the earliest gleam of dawn.

Sunset in the Forest of Fontainebleau, hung on the line in the *Salle des États,* is typical of his masterly style. This fringe of the forest is one of the painter's finest works. The foliage of the oaks in the foreground is full of transparency, and the herd of cows drinking in the pool, where a single tree casts its shadow, gives to the plain that lies beyond, under the glow of the setting sun, such a sense of life as makes this painting one of the most vivid "impressions" of the landscape school of 1830. As we compare this canvas with the later works of the same painter, for instance with the *Marsh in the Landes,* which hangs in the same gallery, where we find him already possessed by the desire to omit nothing, thus losing in strength of detail, we are amazed at the transformation his talent had undergone.

During the Centennial Exhibition of 1889 the current of opinion seemed to give the palm to Daubigny over Theodore Rousseau.

There are two pictures by Daubigny in the Louvre, the *Vintage in Burgundy* and *Spring.* In the first of these subjects we see a level landscape where the vintagers, men and women, are

Daubigny.

Spring.

busied in gathering the grapes, which they pile in a vat dragged by oxen. In the second a peasant girl riding a donkey is making her way across an orchard through a field of green corn.

These two most pleasing pictures, marked by sincerity and a happy inspiration, give the exact measure of Daubigny's talent : he has neither the breadth nor the individuality of Rousseau in his earlier works.

Corot's beginnings were less assertive than Theodore Rousseau's. It was almost in silence that he set himself "to a severe study of drawing and tone," with no thought of exhibiting and no care for public opinion. When he had convinced himself, by incessant labour, of the results to be obtained by extreme simplicity of treatment, applied alike to the figure and to landscape, he ventured forth into the glare of the annual Salons, which are generally fatal to delicate colouring. The verdict of the public was not in his favour. He persisted, nevertheless, in representing remote horizons under a clear sky,

in solving the mysteries of large masses of foliage, in watching and studying the blue shadows that creep across the valleys. He even ventured to give his forest glades a flavour of the antique by the introduction of moving nymphs and fauns.

The Louvre has but five examples of Corot, all landscapes. There is no figure-piece by this master. The paintings that hang in the *Salle des États* are two studies presented by himself : *A View of the Roman Forum*, and the *Coliseum*, memorials of his first visit to Italy, a landscape given to the nation by M. Lallemant, another that came from the Emperor Napoleon III's private collection at Fontainebleau, and only one transferred from the Luxembourg. The greatest landscape-painter of the century, the man whose eye was the most sensitive, the most finely balanced, is, as will be seen, but poorly represented in our great national collection.

The *View of the Roman Forum* and the *Coliseum* show to a supreme degree how strongly Corot, as a beginner, was influenced by a respect for the principles professed by M. Ingres.

No work can be more thoroughly wrought out than the *View of the Roman Forum* where, under a sky of matchless limpid blue, we see the Capitol, the Temple of Vespasian, the Column of Phocas and the Arch of Septimus Severus. Nothing more subtle or more atmospheric can be found in

painting than this group of buildings. In the *Coliseum* the drawing of the Arch of Titus is exquisitely graceful. Landscape painting, scorned though it was by David, when raised to such a lofty height, is grandly eloquent.

I made an excursion, not long ago, to the forest of Rambouillet. In the morning I frequently sat for hours on the edge of the woods, or by the side of the ponds, with a highly-gifted young painter, a master of all the secrets of his art and much disturbed by the movement—or rather the absence of movement—in contemporary art. Some strange theories had been propounded in his presence, at the École des Beaux-Arts; among others, a scorn for the works of Corot. The professors who had directed my friend's studies did not indeed dispute the master's charm, but they ascribed that charm to something intangible, to the very vagueness of the rendering, which, according to them, lacked precision. I had no difficulty in proving his master's mistake by mentioning the *Reminiscence of Italy* in the Louvre and pointing out to him how distinctly the town, which fills the background, rises in stages like an amphitheatre, with what scrupulous accuracy of drawing the little goatherd and the trees that overshadow him stand out against the sky, where slowly moving clouds are tenderly kissed by the rosy hues of sunset. In *Morning (Nymphs and Satyrs)* where, in a forest glade, nymphs and satyrs are dancing with joy at the return of the sun, we seem to see the thrill of the first breath of morning in the quivering leaves of the trees; and this picture, no less than the *Reminiscence of Italy* is marked by a truthfulness of colour which in no way detracts from the perfection of the drawing. "If there is anything to be regretted," said I, "it is that we should not have, side by side with these pictures, the studies from nature, from which they were painted. How invaluable as a lesson would be the first fresh impression of those studies! For, while it is very difficult to paint a picture from nature, the only fault that artists can find with Corot is that he often sacrificed too much to 'keying the picture' in the studio, while this, on the contrary, is the source of the amateur's delight." Corot never adopted the method of his teachers, Michallon and Bertin, in rendering with equal importance everything that met his eye, and this is one of the particular traits of his genius. Following the example of M. Ingres, he retains only the leading lines, the principal features, and in his manner of modelling, he works, like Ingres, in a spirit of sacrifice, simplifying everything to the utmost and thus achieving masterly breadth of style.

Next to Corot is one who held a very considerable place in the French school of this century: I mean Courbet. The first of his pictures to be mentioned here is the *Burial at Ornans,* exhibited in the Salon of 1851, and presented to the Louvre in 1881 by Mademoiselle Courbet, the painter's sister, at the time when I, as Minister of Fine Arts, had purchased the *Stags Fighting*, the *Wounded Man* and the *Man with a Leathern Belt*, which is a portrait of the painter.

In the centre of the picture, in the foreground, beside the open grave, the grave-digger, kneeling, is seen in his shirt-sleeves; to the left stands the priest in a black chasuble, attended by choir-boys and the cross-bearer, and in the middle distance by the assistant-priest and chanters in red robes and pleated caps. Near the frame, to the left, four men are carrying the bier; to the right of the grave-digger we see two friends of the deceased dressed in the old fashion, and a third, in black, hat in hand, who is Proudhon's cousin. Among the weeping women, dressed in black and with frilled caps veiled in crape, one is the painter's mother; she holds a little girl by the hand. In the background the landscape is stormy, under a heavy sky.

This picture measures about 11 by 13 feet and the figures are as large as life. The *Burial at Ornans* is as badly hung as possible in the room known as the Salle Henri II., built on the site of the chapel of Charles V. in the old Louvre. The room is lighted from the side, that is to say very badly. Hence no fair opinion can be formed of this work by Courbet, which is, besides, very black, and the figures, I mean the faces, do not show the delicate handling to be found in other works by the same

Corot.

Landscape

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

painter. It is very evident that, at the time, Courbet was strongly influenced by the Bolognese school. As in the works of the Bologna painters, there is no atmosphere around the figures. Still, in the *Burial at Ornans* there are unmistakable signs of energy, which foretell the increasing power manifested in the later works of the Master of Ornans.

From this point of view, the *Stags Fighting*, although severely criticized for the lack of action in the animals, is a magnificent composition in which the animal painter and landscape painter have displayed equal power. It must be admitted that we do not yet see in *Stags Fighting* the delicate handling, the freshness and grace that charm us in the *Deer Cover*, and justify the lyrical rapture of my friend Castagnary; but think of the robust power that enabled a man to fill a canvas of more than sixteen by thirteen feet with dense foliage, two fighting stags, and a third belling by the side of a brook!

The *Deer Cover* is a smaller picture, rather more than three by six feet. The glade, enclosed by steep rocks, is bright with the vegetation of spring. A brook murmurs at the feet of the crouching doe, whose silky coat we see modelled in full sunlight. Few pictures in the Louvre are more pleasing to the eye. The *Wave*, which was transferred to the *Salle des États* from the Luxembourg, is a very fine example, though it has neither the delicacy of the *Deer Cover* nor the robust quality of the *Man with a Leathern Belt*.

What influence did Courbet have on the art movement? Like Delacroix, like Géricault before Delacroix, he showed a powerful personality; though his methods have found no followers and his manual technique, which was often very faulty, has not been imitated. Still, by a certain ruggedness he has led back the painter's eye to the observation of the circumstantial element, which is one of the conditions of beauty.

There were, in the tentative efforts which brought about the art movement of 1830, two very distinct tendencies : one that, with Delacroix, pressed forward art towards a skill in invention that adapted itself to the boldest, most spirited and most improbable themes ; the other, with M. Ingres, more captivated by the truth, and treating synthetically the object seen, to the point even of reducing it to a formula at times rigid, but always grandly expressive.

The influence of M. Ingres made itself felt in Corot, in Millet, and even in Courbet's earlier works ; but Courbet, who as a beginner was very careful in his treatment of form, soon yielded to the ambition of painting everything he saw moving about him, and his curiosity prompted him to depict the vulgar and the commonplace. To achieve this he availed himself, unfortunately, of methods now out of date ; then his triviality became all the more apparent in his pictures because his eye and hand were not in accord : what the one could see with admirable accuracy the other reproduced in a heavy manner that was luminous only in his less finished works. At the same time he rendered French art an immense service by diverting it from the path it was about to follow and which would have led it into the footsteps of the Flemish masters or into those of the imaginative Venetians.

One thing has always greatly surprised me in Courbet, whose genius I must eagerly confess, I admire immensely, and that is the weakness of his handling. His first sketches from nature are marvellously true ; to be convinced of this we have only to look at his series of landscape studies, his "portraits of trees," as he himself would say, or his sketches in Franche-Comté. These are simply perfect. The values are in full harmony ; but as soon as he works up the shadows, as soon as he seeks the minute details he wants to put into the lights, as for instance in his portrait of Champfleury or in that of Berlioz, his brush is heavy with coppery tones and we begin to regret that he should have elaborated what was much better finished when, on the first impulse, he had without hesitation found the means of expressing what he wished to represent. When, with Castagnary and his nephew, we arranged the exhibition of his works at the École des Beaux-Arts we hung on the left, on entering the first room, a whole series of his original studies and sketches ; and it was a joy to linger before that panel where every touch of the brush revealed the profound science of the draughtsman.

It cannot be too often repeated, that all these great artists of the school of Truth, of which our century may well be proud, drew with the brush as easily as the so-called classical painters, who, while flaunting their Greco-Roman traditions, found it difficult to draw the curving arabesques of their rough contours, which lose in warmth when filled in with paint.

A fact not generally known, and which it is curious to recall, is that at the Divan Lepelletier, Couture often had very warm discussions with Courbet, who, at the time, professed the greatest admiration for M. Ingres.

But we have only to look at the portrait of himself by Courbet, which hangs in the Louvre under the name of the *Man with a Leathern Belt,* to be convinced that the Master of Ornans, who proclaimed himself a pupil of Nature, had been deeply impressed by the doctrines of M. Ingres. The study of style in this portrait, and also the very careful drawing in the Assyrian profile of the head he afterwards painted from himself in his large picture of the *Studio,* now in the possession of M. Desfossés, are irrefutable proofs of the influence that directed him, as he confessed in his discussions with Thomas Couture.

Diaz used to take part in these oratorical tilts, but he always pleaded at great length in favour of Corregio, and expressed indifference to all that was thought beautiful in these days, only seeing beauty in things of the past.

His picture *No Admittance* is undeniably modern in sentiment, nowithstanding his professed aversion to the modern school.

Gustave Courbet.

The Man with a Leathern Belt (Portrait of the Painter).

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

I must frankly confess that I had a great liking for the *Romans of the Decadence*, by Thomas Couture. Paul de Saint-Victor was right in saying: "this composition, which was exhibited in the Salon of 1847, that is to say in the Salon immediately preceding the revolution of 1848, created a great impression, owing not only to the circumstances attending its exhibition, but also to its great dash and to the gloomy atmosphere that fills the air and space in this enormous painting."

In considering the picture more calmly, it becomes evident that in the *Romans of the Decadence* Thomas Couture is more nearly allied to such French painters as Troy, Coypel and Delafosse, than to his master Gros, and that, in reality, he is quite indifferent to the movement that urged French art forward to a circumscribed sincerity or to an exuberance of imagination. He remains calm in the midst of the observers and the agitators. He is not attracted by the methodical tendencies of the former nor the passion of the latter. Far superior, however, to Delaroche or Ary Scheffer, he rushes into a system of technique that would have made him a scene-painter of the very first rank, but which leaves him only in the third rank of the artists of his time. He is devoid of convictions, consequently he lacks fire. Besides, he is haunted by the thought of making money, a terrible thing for an artist; and, by a singular irony of fate, the painter of the *Romans of the Decadence* became the artist of the decadence.

I now wish to speak of François Millet. Writing to his friend Sensier, Millet reminds him of a letter from Nicolas Poussin to M. de Chantelou, referring to his picture *The Manna in the Wilderness*: "I will not say to you, look at the fine colouring, see what action it has, how well it is arranged; but if you recollect what I told you about the movement of the figures I promised to put into it, I think you will easily understand my intentions, and recognize the figures that are exhausted, those that are compassionate, and those that are charitable."

We have Millet entirely in this quotation from the Poussin letter sent to his friend Sensier. Millet never was a painter in the strictest sense of the word. He was, and will always be, the man of deep thought who produced an admirable book from the soil and the peasant. Careless of fine technique he sees only the end to be obtained, the idea he wants to impress on our mind. Look at the *Gleaners*: three women in simple attitudes are seen in profile gathering ears of wheat. The woman in the foreground scarcely stoops; the two others bending to the ground pick up the wheat with one hand, and hold in

the other the gleanings they have already tied in a bunch. Beyond are the sheaves that the reapers are making, and to the right, in front of a farm, is a man on horseback. There is an entire poem in this scene, a touch of the sublime. Nay, there is more. It represents one of the most pathetic facts of our social life. As in the picture of the *Manna,* we see here, treated in a modern key, the life of those who suffer, who are compassionate and charitable.

The mention of this picture in the catalogue of the Louvre contains an error of date. It was in 1889, not in 1881, that Madame Pommery, of Rheims, presented the *Gleaners* to the Louvre. Madame Pommery wished to give the *Angelus* to the nation, but was not advised of the Secrétan sale. When I, with those of my friends who gave Courbet's *Deer Cover* to the Louvre, purchased the *Angelus,* she expressed, but too late, her regret at not having been able to acquire Millet's masterpiece, which, owing to the hesitation of the French Government, had just been sold to Mr. Sutton, of New York. It has since been placed in M. Chauchard's collection. "There is no real production where there is no expression," said Millet, thus summing up his great career as an artist, which was always dominated by the loftiest sentiments.

What a wealth of imagination we find in his work! On the other hand, how poor in this respect, do we find all that Troyon produced! In speaking of his *Oxen Going Forth to Plough,* Théophile Gautier wrote: "The animal's heads with their square muzzles, the dragging dew-laps, the callous knees, the sturdy necks of the hardy beasts that are going forth to trace the furrows where our daily bread shall spring, are all rendered with masterly breadth and feeling." I do not contradict him; but I must add: How heavy the execution and what emptiness under all that load of colour. Troyon's cattle have no bones. In *Oxen Going Forth to Plough,* and in *Returning to the Farm,* everything is sacrificed to the effects of light which, after all, only produce a false illusion. At the same time no painter understood technique better than Troyon. He stands forth as a master beside Brascassat, whose manner is dry and whose technique is metallic and unpleasant. The *Red Bull and Black Cow* by this last painter, which hangs in the Salle Henri II., is no more pleasant to look at than the red cow watching a dog leap over a gate in Brascassat's other picture *(Landscape with Cattle),* which has found a place in the *Salle des États.* But, if, as compared with Brascassat, Troyon appears as a great master, whose hand is prodigiously skilful in serving his eye in obedience to the teachings of landscape-painters who have renewed the study of nature, and though he be the equal of the most highly gifted of them all, how much more is rural life truly expressed in the most rudimentary of Millet's drawings than in the vast and empty picture of the painter of *Oxen Going Forth to Plough.* Millet speaks in such noble language that he goes to our soul and penetrates to our most secret thoughts. Troyon never gives us any but material impressions. Even Diaz, with his subdued harmonies, his faded colours, the brilliancy of his conventional golden flesh tints, moves us more deeply than the painter of these oxen.

Horace Vernet had no more to do with the revival of 1830 than Delaroche, Schnetz and many others who continued to paint without troubling themselves about what was going on around them. Mention however must be made of the small picture by him belonging to the Louvre, which is the best composition he ever painted. I speak of the *Marshal Moncey at the Clichy Barrier,* which was painted under the advice of a man of great taste, M. Odiot, who himself figures as an actor in the scene.

In front of the Clichy barrier, Marshal Moncey, on horseback, indicates to Commandant Odiot the point to be defended. The group of National Guards, cavalrymen and grenadiers fills up the right-hand side of the canvas, and the artillerymen who are manœuvring their pieces give movement to the central part of the picture, whilst the two wounded soldiers and the young peasant girl crouched down beside her chattels, who occupy the left side, constitute an intensely interesting episode.

Gustave Courbet.

The Wave.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

Isidore Pils has put a no less lofty intensity into his *Battery of Artillery Crossing the Alma*. This painting is at Versailles.

The only work by Pils at the Louvre is *Rouget de l'Isle Singing the Marseillaise for the First Time*. How often this painting has been copied! How many municipal councils deliberate with this picture before their eyes, of the young officer, in profile, singing the patriotic hymn that he has just composed, in presence of the Mayor of Strasburg, who listens, surrounded by his guests, with an emotion that is expressed by the attitude of each one, and which causes the tears to flow from the eyes of the young girl who is leaning over the piano upon which her mother accompanies Rouget de l'Isle.

There are subjects that incite an artist, and the *Marseillaise* is such a subject. This little painting in the *Salle des États* will always make Pils celebrated.

To return to the older artists, the Louvre possesses two famous pictures by Paul Delaroche : the *Death of Queen Elizabeth* (1603) and *Edward's Sons* (1473). On the first mentioned canvas, the artist, seeking in the past, according to his custom, for melodramatic subjects, has represented the sovereign clothed in a brilliant costume strongly in contrast with the livid pallor of her face already touched by death. She is reclining, with her head resting upon a rich cushion, and supported by two maids of honour, whilst a third is sobbing. The grand dignitaries of the Court contemplate this spectacle with emotion.

In the second picture, which has been more often copied, engraved and chromolithographed than the first one, the two sons of Edward IV., who are to be assassinated by order of their uncle Richard, Duke of Gloucester, are seated upon a bed with upright columns, and interrupt their

reading at the approach of the murderer Tyrrel, whose coming is signalled by the barking of a little dog.

Paul Delaroche painted a great many pictures. He has been praised and glorified more than any other great artist in the world, owing to his alliance with the Vernet family, which was always high in favour. (Delaroche married Horace Vernet's only daughter, at Rome, in 1835.) Besides, his facility in arranging a subject upon his canvas and in making it attractive for the general public enabled him to obtain more official orders than he could execute. Henriquel Dupont, an eminent engraver, has made a masterly reproduction of Delaroche's *Hemicycle of the Fine Arts*, Messrs. Vitet, Henri Delaborde and Charles Blanc have praised him in articles and in volumes; but it was only after his death, in 1845, that everybody recognized that it was quite natural his talent had never been discussed, it not being a question for discussion, for with the exception of a skill in arrangement and an unquestionable cleverness, he was neither a master in drawing nor a colourist.

In the catalogue of the Louvre Paul Delaroche is confounded with his elder brother, who was also an artist, but who gave up painting to become manager of the Mont-de-Piété, or government pawnbroking office. Paul Delaroche was born in 1797, while his brother was born two years earlier.

The two Scheffer brothers, both highly gifted, were also very popular at the same epoch as Paul Delaroche. The Louvre has no painting by Henri Scheffer, whose portrait of the Marjolin family, his *Charlotte Corday* and a number of *genre* subjects are worthy of esteem.

Ary Scheffer's works at the Louvre are : the *Death of Géricault*, the *Temptation of Christ* and *Saint Augustin and Sainte Monique*.

The *Death of Géricault* is a small composition, executed in 1858, thirty-four years after the death of the painter of the *Medusa*, from indications furnished by Dedreux-Dorcy, uncle of Alfred Dedreux. Géricault is represented upon his death-bed, with Colonel Bro leaning over him. In the foreground, Dedreux-Dorcy holds his friend's hand and conceals his own face. This part of the picture is painted with great care and is very interesting. The work was bought for the French Government by M. Nieuwerkerque in 1858.

The *Temptation of Christ* portrays Christ standing on the summit of a mountain and indicating the way to Heaven to a demon who seeks to tempt the Saviour by pointing to the earth. This painting was purchased by the French Government in 1849 at a cost of 15,000 francs. *Saint Augustin and Sainte Monique* has often been reproduced by engraving. This work was painted by Ary Scheffer for Queen Maria Amelia; in 1859 he made a copy of it for the French Government, and it is this copy that is now at the Louvre. The price paid for this copy was 20,000 francs.

But the paintings that have rendered Ary Scheffer's name popular are *Mignon* and *Marguerite*. One of the artist's admirers, M. Charles Lenormand, member of the Institute, has very justly shown—and several of the portraits confirm this opinion—the respect that Ary Scheffer had for a kind of art which, we are obliged to say, is without warmth although not entirely lacking in charm.

At the time when Paul Delaroche and Ary Scheffer were so highly esteemed by the public, M. Hippolyte Flandrin also had his enthusiastic admirers, although they were not so numerous. His paintings in the Paris churches of Saint-Vincent-de-Paul, Saint-Germain-des-Prés and Saint-Séverin gave him great renown among the members of the Institute. His master, M. Ingres, was very fond of him and even employed him to copy some of the heads of his portraits, that of M. Duchâtel, for example, which became in Flandrin's hands as faint as the original was brilliant. M. Hippolyte Flandrin was, however, the preferred disciple, and it would be unjust not to admit that every work he produced, including the portrait of Napoleon III., has a lofty air, that the artist possessed the same faith

Diaz.

No Admittance.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

as the Byzantine monks who made, according to the suggestions obtained from Panselinos's works, some admirable series of the different scenes of the Passion.

The painting at the Louvre entitled a *Figure Study*, and which represents a young man crouched down by the sea, his head upon his knees and his arms crossed around his legs, reveals an admirable power in drawing and a real vigour in conception.

Flandrin's *Portrait of a Maiden*, in profile, and his portrait of *Madame Vinet*, front view, with a black mantle and red roses pricked in her hair, belong to another kind of painting. It is evident that here the artist was restricted by the requirements of his models, which did not allow him the same freedom of manner that gives so much expression to the *Figure Study*. The crossed hands in the *Portrait of a Maiden* are, however, strongly modelled and painted with remarkable vigour, and would not have been disowned by M. Ingres himself.

Flandrin was never a great public favourite such as the dramatist Paul Delaroche or the elegiac Ary Scheffer. These two artists shared the applause of the crowd with a man who was alone more petted than both of these celebrated painters together. I mean Horace Vernet, of whose last work, *Marshal Moncey at the Clichy Barrier*, I have already spoken.

Inheriting a great name, Horace Vernet was, from his infancy befriended by the Empress Maria Louisa and King Jerome. His father, Carle Vernet taught him to draw and to write at the same time, and his noble patrons obtained his admission to the studio of Vincent, who was then high in the favour of imperial society. At twenty-one years of age Horace Vernet handled without effort the brush, the burin and the pencil, without neglecting horses, fencing and hunting. Under the Restoration, his lithographs celebrating the Napoleonic legend gave him a popularity equal to that of Béranger, and when, later on, he exhibited in his studio, decorated with tricoloured flags and cockades, his paintings that had been refused at the Salon, the event made such a stir that Charles X. invited him to the Tuileries and at once gave him an order to paint the battles of Bouvines and Fontenoy. The following year the King ordered the *Jules II.*, and, in 1828, appointed him Director of the French Academy at Rome. From this moment Horace Vernet acquired an importance in the artistic world that no artist in France had obtained since the time of Lebrun. His whole existence, in fact, was a most happy one. He was encouraged by the Duke of Orleans, who, to further his ambition, selected his associates among the Bonapartists and Liberals, both of whom at that moment formed a single group; he was eagerly welcomed by the Duke when the Revolution of 1830 had made him King of France, and also, after 1848,

kindly received by General Cavaignac, whom he had previously met in Algeria. Later on he found in Napoleon III.'s government, which made him an officer in the Legion of Honour, the form of sovereignty under which he had been cradled and towards which his sympathies had never changed.

With the *Maréchal Moncey* the Louvre has only two other works by Horace Vernet : *Judith and Holofernes*, a grand and noble composition, exhibited at the Salon of 1847, and *Raphael at the Vatican*, exhibited in 1833; this work was suggested by the studies he made for the ceiling of the second gallery of Egyptian antiquities, painted by order of Charles X. and representing the *Pope Jules II. Ordering of Bramante, Michel Angelo and Raphael the Paintings for the Vatican and Saint Peter's.*

There is not an official writer on art or a soldier wielding the pen who has not praised the author of the *Arab Family*, and, in fact, it is only justice to have glorified such an active and industrious career throughout which the artist never had a moment of his own, being continually at work for the government.

Alexandre Gabriel Decamps was a contemporary of Horace Vernet. He began his artistic studies in Pujol's studio. His tastes did not incline him towards historical painting, but rather to *genre* and landscape subjects. Greatly influenced by the study of Rembrandt's later works, convinced that the preparation of the groundwork, and the impasto, or thickness of colour, give transparency to shades and vigour to the luminous parts of a painting, he applied himself in 1827, date of his first picture sent to the Salon, to drawing his figures with a scrupulous care, then to bringing out each line with such a precision that a sculptor would have been able to model his figures and grounds according to the indications given. In so strongly endeavouring to fascinate by means of reliefs, Decamps did not perceive that he ran the risk of deadening the movements he desired to reproduce. His work is, however, impregnated with a style that is purely his own and one that gives him a high rank among the artists of the 1830 period.

Towing Horses is the most important work of Decamps at the Louvre. The sunset sky is very effective, while the horses, harnessed in couples and pulling with all their might, with their driver mounted on one of them, are beautifully designed. The whole of this simple scene is grand in character.

It is regrettable that the painter of the *Battle of the Cimbrians* and of *Joseph* is represented at the Louvre only by the *Towing Horses,* the *Caravan* and the *Bull-dog and Scotch Terrier*. This last-named canvas was purchased for 16,500 francs at the Goldsmith sale in 1888.

Diaz de la Peña had at the beginning, like Decamps, a taste for oriental scenes. After his *Love Duet*, exhibited in 1831, he sent to the Salon of 1834 a *Turk* and *Ottoman Soldiers Retreating ;* then, successively, the *Algerian Women* and an *Interior of a Harem*. His association with the artists of the Barbizon school diverted his attention to landscape painting. He showed a preference for forest interiors and has painted some that are delicious in colour and composed with great science. Diaz, in fact, attached much importance to the arrangement of his subjects. Although apparently impulsive, he was in reality very deliberate and fond of making combinations. He had been taught by his teacher Sigalon, to respect the old Italian masters, and of all these masters Corregio was his favourite. His picture *No Admittance !* is a subject difficult to describe, but we may admire the execution without troubling ourselves about the artist's intention. A woman with uncovered breast, standing before a door concealed by a curtain and well guarded by a Cupid, forbids by a sign three young women to enter. The subject, in reality, is a simple pretence for a play of effects of light upon flesh colours. *The Pyrénées,* the *Birch Tree, In the Court at the Reine Blanche*, the *Gipsies,* the *Fairy with Pearls* have, in very different notes, the same style as the principal work just mentioned. Diaz was preeminently a charmer.

Pierre François Eugene Giraud was older than Diaz, but he preserved a youthful appearance

Thomas Couture.

The Romans of the Decadence.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

to the very last, and displayed an extraordinary vigour in his latest compositions. The Louvre has, unfortunately, none of his works, neither any by his brother, Sebastien Charles Giraud; but his son, Victor Giraud, warmly patronized by the Princess Mathilda and Prince Napoleon, as his father and uncle had been, is represented in the Henri II. Gallery by the *Slave Dealer*, a painting exhibited at the Salon of 1867, and bought at that moment by the French Government. Some young slave girls are grouped upon a platform on the left side of the canvas. The slave dealer presents one of them to a patrician in side view and having at his feet two white greyhounds. In the background are a sea and a Roman city built on rising ground in the form of an amphitheatre. The *Slave Dealer* had a great success when it was first exhibited.

In this same Henri II. Gallery there is also a painting that caused the greatest sensation at

the Salon of 1852 : the *Human Comedy,* by M. Hamon. A group of children are before a Punch and Judy show, which is surmounted by a statue of Minerva. The puppets represent Bacchus and Cupid; to the left, Diogenes and his tub, Eschylus, Dante, Homer, etc. The unanimous opinion in 1852 was that M. Hamon's composition had a high philosophical significance and revealed an artist of superior talent.

Flowers, by Saint-Jean; the oriental landscapes by Tournemine, and those by Belly, had almost as much vogue as Hamon's picture; but the infatuation of the public for these various works which, after all, were worthy of commendation, has now given way to a riper judgment. M. Chintreuil's landscapes, which were not very enthusiastically welcomed at their first appearance, have, on the contrary, been since appreciated as they deserve to be. It is true that these landscapes do not possess the masterly qualities shown by Chintreuil's teacher, Corot, but connoisseurs have been able to admire the sincerity which gives to the landscape of *Space,* to the *Roes' Grove,* or to the study of *Rain and Sunshine,* the perfume of a pastoral poesy that envelopes us and goes straight to the most intimate sentiments of our soul.

How many other artists are, without all of them having the same right, gradually recovering their rank in the French school! Gleyre, with his *Lost Illusions*, Benouville, with his *Saint François d'Assise*, Bouchot, with his *Bonaparte at the Council of the Five Hundred*, Aligny, with his *Italian Villa*, Bidault, with a *View of Subiaco*, Gustave Brion, de la Berge, Timbal, etc. How many names, also, are missing in the collection at the Louvre, which possesses neither a Bruandet, a Michel, a Dehodencq, a Jongkin, a Servin, nor so many others so unjustly disdained!

Gleyre, who was the favourite pupil of Paul Delaroche, has left very few paintings. The *Lost Illusions* is a revery that the artist traced upon his canvas with an evident feeling of discouragement after his return from a long journey in Abyssinia, where he came near losing his eyesight. The vision is well arranged, although the style of drawing is somewhat affected, but still of noble aspect. The colour is harmoniously agreeable.

The *Saint François d'Assise Dying Blesses his Native City*, was exhibited by Benouville at the Salon of 1853. In this work, as in *Lost Illusions*, the artist has sought to render the expressions by a play of lines, and to balance the composition. Adopting Poussin's manner, he has reduced the landscape to its simplest and, at the same time, most expressive form. This picture has, by its limpid qualities, tempted a number of engravers, who have made some fine reproductions of it.

François Bouchot and his *Bonaparte at the Council of the Five Hundred*, remained for a long while ignored. This picture, painted in 1840, was at once relegated to an obscure corner of the Versailles Museum, and consequently not seen by visitors. It was brought into full light at the Centennial Exhibition of 1889, and at once claimed by the Curator of the Louvre.

Caruelle d'Aligny is one of the last painters who remained faithful to the conventional style of landscape. Although born in the Department of la Nièvre, he is claimed by the city of Lyons as one of her sons, and she is right in her claim, for Aligny was Superintendent of the Lyons School of Fine Arts for many years. There he always showed himself in favour of artistic principles that are debatable, but that render his pictures much superior to those of Timbal, who professed the same doctrines.

Why is Dehodencq's *Bull Fight* not at the Louvre? Dehodencq, with his clear vision and vigorous treatment, which increased as he studied the Velasquezs and the Goyas during his long visits to Madrid, is one of the most interesting artists of the modern French school. Possibly the rules and regulations prevent the transfer of his picture from the Luxembourg Museum to the Louvre.

Jongkin and Servin are not, perhaps, in the same position, as they have no paintings at the Luxembourg, but as they have not been dead ten years their works cannot be bought for the principal French Museum; because, to borrow an old and very just explanation, if the modern school is represented at the Louvre by artists of exceptional talent who can rightfully claim to be Nature's sons, the Museum also contains a goodly number of works by those who are only nephews, and even cousins, relatives so distant that their mother would no longer recognize them.

Of what value are the childish conceptions of M. Tournemine and so many other second-rate productions, which are out of place at the Louvre?

But I must speak of what I may call the category of unquiet or hesitating artists, a class that is eminently respectable because they have practised their art with an earnest conviction.

Among the first we must place Theodore Chassériau, a pupil of Ingres disturbed by Delacroix. His picture of the *Tepidarium* is one of the most curious productions of the wavering period of an artist who showed his distinctively personal qualities later on in his *Daphnis and Chloe*, in his religious paintings and in his frescoes at the Cour des Comptes. I tried to save these frescoes in 1881. They have since been allowed to deteriorate to such an extent that only

Isidore Pils.

Rouget de l'Isle Singing the Marseillaise for the First Time.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

recently it was impossible to gather but a few fragments of them. In the *Tepidarium*, Chassériau has represented some Pompeiian women who are reposing after their bath. The attitudes are studied with a carefulness of drawing that shows the influence of Ingres. In colour, Chassériau seeks to give the same appearance as that of Delacroix's oriental canvases, and to copy, as well, the style of execution of the masters of the Seville school of the sixteenth century, Chassériau being a native of Spanish America. M. Ingres, however, can claim the best part in the *Tepidarium*, as Delacroix can attribute to himself a decisive influence in the painting of the *Arab Horsemen Recovering their Dead*. A strange

phenomenon is that the *Tepidarium* dates from the Salon of 1853, and the *Arab Horsemen* from the Salon of 1851. Chassériau, it will thus be seen, hesitated until 1855, going from Ingres to Delacroix, and from Delacroix to Ingres. When he painted at Versailles the portrait of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld he forgot Ingres and Delacroix in order to think of Velasquez. His paintings in the Paris churches of Saint-Roch, Saint-Merry and Saint-Philippe-du-Roule, put him in possession of himself once more, and when he made his splendid series of etchings of *Othello*, he became a master that no longer owed anything to anybody.

M. Eugene Fromentin must also be classed among the unquiet artists. He began to paint late in life and was a pupil of his father, an amateur artist at Saint-Maurice, near La Rochelle. Gifted with great facility of observation, Eugene Fromentin reproduced by pen or brush whatever struck him. He soon acquired the experience of a professional literary man and the precision of a born

artist; but in his books as well as in his pictures, notwithstanding this experience and precision, we feel the hesitations of a man who wishes to express his ideas with a power that is lacking. His horses are drawn with great purity of outline, his horsemen are well posed; he takes care to set off all the attractive details in a landscape, just as in his books he brings out with rare delicacy and in clear, simple language, effects that escaped the attention of those who had previously treated the same subjects. Still, there is a something wanting that we should like to find in his books and in his paintings, a something that is not cleverness—for he was supremely clever—but *maestria*, in a word, that is to say the mysterious power conferred by genius. *Hawking in Algeria* which is at the Louvre, and to which the artist gave as a sub-title *The Quarry*, is a very fine picture. No painting is more attractive when analyzed in all its details. To the right, mounted Arab chiefs, accompanied by cavaliers, hold a hawk upon the fist; to the left, kneeling servants let loose other hawks after a hare that they have captured and killed. In the background, a servant is bringing three horses. Even to the rocky landscape there is not a single detail that needs retouching, and it is easy to understand the immense success obtained by his picture at the Salon of 1863. The Louvre has two other paintings by Fromentin, *Women on the Banks of the Nile*, bequeathed by Madame Boucicaut, and the *Arab Encampment,* an unfinished canvas, the last one upon which the artist was at work when death overtook him, and which was bought by the French Government at the sale held after the painter's death. Fromentin was, above all, a modest man, and, as I have said, unquiet. He was very indulgent towards other artists, and appreciated their works with a justness that make his critical articles masterpieces of good sense and sagacity. At the same time he was never satisfied with himself, and this trait is always the mark of a superior artist. Very few men have been loved and esteemed as Eugene Fromentin; few men were as worthy as he of the regards of his contemporaries and the affection of his family. His death has left a great void in the modern French School.

After Chassériau and Fromentin, Henri Regnault is the artist who has in the highest degree reflected the inquietude that took possession of all minds on the morrow of the triumphal manifestations of the Delacroixs and Rousseaus, after the sublime teachings of Ingres and in presence of the salutary audaciousness of Courbet. Henri Regnault's life is briefly told in the Louvre catalogue as follows: "Roman Prize in 1860. Journey in Spain and Morocco. Killed at the Battle of Buzenval, near Paris, January 19, 1870."

I have in my possession some letters by Regnault that may usefully complete the correspondence published by Charpentier. In every line of these letters it is easy to see how much the artist is preoccupied by what has been done before his time. He shows a decided artistic inclination, but seems frightened at the difficulties. He would like to have all the obstacles disappear before his impatience to render what he feels. When he painted the portrait of Marshal Prim he laid all the blame on his model and his surroundings. "I am unwilling to make any changes," he writes, "I do not wish to oblige the General to give me new sittings. He is not satisfied with his portrait, neither am I. And yet, there are certain traits that I have seized and am not disposed to retouch."

The portrait, which is perched too high in the *Salle des États*, is grand in character and an admirable piece of work. The General, bare-headed, upon a strong-limbed Andalusian horse, stops his steed abruptly. Every feature of the conspirator's face is stamped with an indefinable mixture of audacity and astonishment. How far will he dare go? He would, perhaps, like to stop where he is, but his head has been turned by the applause of the crowd. He must be obedient to his destiny. In his portrait of Prim the artist has rendered his impressions with a

Horace Vernet.
Judith and Holofernes.

power that places him upon a level he never afterwards attained. Even in his *Execution Without Trial at Granada*, which is in the Henri II. Gallery, or in the *Salomé*, which has been so much admired, the ability is no longer the same.

His small portrait of the Countess of Barck is a delicious bit of painting, and includes all the artistic refinement possible. Regnault has, in this work, shown that he possessed every resource of his art. The Countess is represented at nearly full length, slightly turned to the left, with the face fronting the spectator. She wears a white and pink dress, with a black mantilla crossed over the corsage. A pomegranate flower is pricked in her hair, and there is not a detail in the picture, even to the escutcheoned tapestry in the background, that does not envelop in a charming harmony of tones this little body quivering with life and kindly expression.

And yet, what a distance separates this little pearl, which is one of the most precious gems of the *Salle des États*, from the manly portrait of Prim! At the moment when Regnault painted this dramatic scene of the Spanish General's triumph his mind received a ray of truth that inflamed him to such an extent that his hand was able feverishly to render one of the most eloquent impressions of contemporary art. What a terrible loss we have sustained by the disappearance of such a highly-gifted artist, whose career was stopped by a stupid bullet! The École des Beaux-Arts has fulfilled a pious duty in consecrating in one of its galleries a monument to his heroism. Henri Regnault was one of the last painters shaken and disturbed by the movement produced in 1830.

This leads us to ask what was, exactly, that sort of renascence of all the arts which took place at that period. The school of 1830, which might more properly be called the modern school, was the result of that extraordinary florescence which manifested itself during the tranquil years of the Restoration, on the morrow of those stormy years of the First Empire, during which all the efforts of the imagination and the love of grandeur were exclusively, or nearly so, absorbed by the preoccupation of war.

In the course of this expansion of the intellectual faculties of France, the art of painting was transformed. It took some of its examples from England, as the early works of Theodore Rousseau show. It pursued with Delacroix, who was very enthusiastic over the Flemings, and particularly Rubens, the research of historical visions in works radiating with its own genius. Finally, and for this it should be especially praised, it renewed the grand French tradition, sundered since

the Clouets and perverted by an Italianism that the Italians themselves would have disowned. The modern school requires clearness, and in the two greatest manifestations of modern painting that have been made in the course of this century—the Exhibition of 1855 and the Centennial Exhibition of 1889 — it showed that this limpidity and this admirable sentiment of moderation which it had regained radiated over the whole world with such a brilliancy that its teaching was henceforth at Paris and not at Rome.

How does it happen that the curators of the Louvre so long refused to see such an evident truth? How is it possible to believe that it is only recently the doors of the great French national museum have been opened to works that are the honour of our national art? I have said at the beginning of this study that the curators were hampered by the strict regulations, and it is in the application of these regulations that we must seek an excuse for their action.

But there is something more. The curators of the Louvre are not the only masters; they must reckon with the architects. Now the architects are foolish enough to believe that a gallery destined for the exhibition of paintings ought first to be decorated by them and often overloaded with so much ornamentation that the stoutest canvases run the risk of being crushed by the frame.

The *Salle des États* is the most painful example of these architectural errors. M. Edmond Guillaume, who arranged this gallery for the paintings of the modern school, was a capable man, with the most praiseworthy intentions; but he simply followed the precedents in exaggerating them. He worked in the same manner as his predecessors, but tried to do more than they.

In reality the Louvre is one of the most badly arranged museums for the exhibition of paintings; most of the galleries are badly lighted and the works badly distributed on the walls. Nothing is more desirable, first of all, than to make a new classification and to place all the works of the same artist on the same panel, with sufficient space between each frame. In the second place, nothing would be easier than to change the partitions, to increase the number in the gallery looking on to the Seine, and to sacrifice some of the rooms, such as the Henri II. gallery, which receives a small amount of light at each side while the centre is plunged in obscurity. This gallery, like many others, could be reserved for the *objets d'art*.

I cannot, in this study, speak of the French school of art in general, my task being to talk especially about the modern school, that is to say the school which came into existence in 1830; but do not the curators of the Louvre think—and especially M. Lafenestre, who is a liberally-minded man —that it would be of the highest importance, and even indispensable, to be able to follow uninterruptedly all the manifestations of French national art from its origin to the present day?

When I said, just now, that the artistic renascence of 1830 renewed in its highest and most persistent expression the French traditions sundered since Clouet, I by no means intended to ignore the great artists who have, since the time of François I., remained faithful to the ideas that constitute the mark of our national tendencies. It is, therefore, regrettable that visitors to the Louvre should be obliged to hunt out in the most obscure corners of the museum many of the paintings that teach us the admirable careers of Poussin, Lesueur, Joseph Vernet, Watteau, Boucher, Chardin, the La Tours, the Peronneaus, without speaking of the Lebruns, the Largillières, the Nattiers, and all those who flourished before our century.

What is important to bring into full view in a museum like the Louvre is the continuity of effort towards an invariable end, the methodical and unfailing production, the onward march towards the triumph of sincerity, strength, precision and moderation. The paintings that express so many great and rare qualities, which are the characteristics of the French race, should be conspicuously shown in chronological order.

J. R. Brascassat.

Landscape with Cattle.

After a great many complaints, certain improvements have been made by the management of the Louvre. Consulting committees have been appointed and have purchased, with the approval of the curators, several valuable works. What I now ask of these curators and consulting committees, who have a special fund for purchases and who are seconded in their task by the private society of the "Friends of the Louvre," is a renewed, suggestive and vibrating order that shall give to the Louvre its veritable physiognomy of an establishment destined to develop the taste of those who visit its galleries. It is only after having examined what the Louvre really possesses that all will be unanimous in recognising that artists like Corot are poorly represented, and that artists like Ingres should be given a special gallery. To do this it is only necessary for those to whom I appeal to unite a strong will to their knowledge and taste.

It is of little consequence that the different governments which have succeded one another in France

have made some strange purchases. Let us not draw any distinctions, but try and present to the public the cycle accomplished by French thought, and render homage to those great minds who are, as it were, the protecting deities of French national art.

I have made an appeal to the broad intelligence of M. Lafenestre, who is the Curator of Paintings and Drawings, and who is seconded in his labour by young men to all of whom the Director General of the French National Museums, M. Kaëmpfen, leaves an entire freedom. M. Lafenestre has already accomplished a great deal in the reorganisation of the special section confided to his care. He has rid the galleries of some of the specimens of a theory of art long admired and for which his predecessors—who were very fond of the artificial art to which we owe the Bolognese school—had reserved many of the places of honour. He has strengthened the collection of the early Italian masters, and if we may regret that he and his aids have sometimes sacrificed art too much to learning in

recent acquisitions, we must admit that under his influence a great many improvements have been made in the arrangement of the galleries.

But why, having done so much does not the management of the Louvre risk other reforms that have been adopted in foreign museums and which would give in Paris the same enjoyment experienced in the National Gallery at London, or in the museums of Munich, Brussels and Amsterdam?

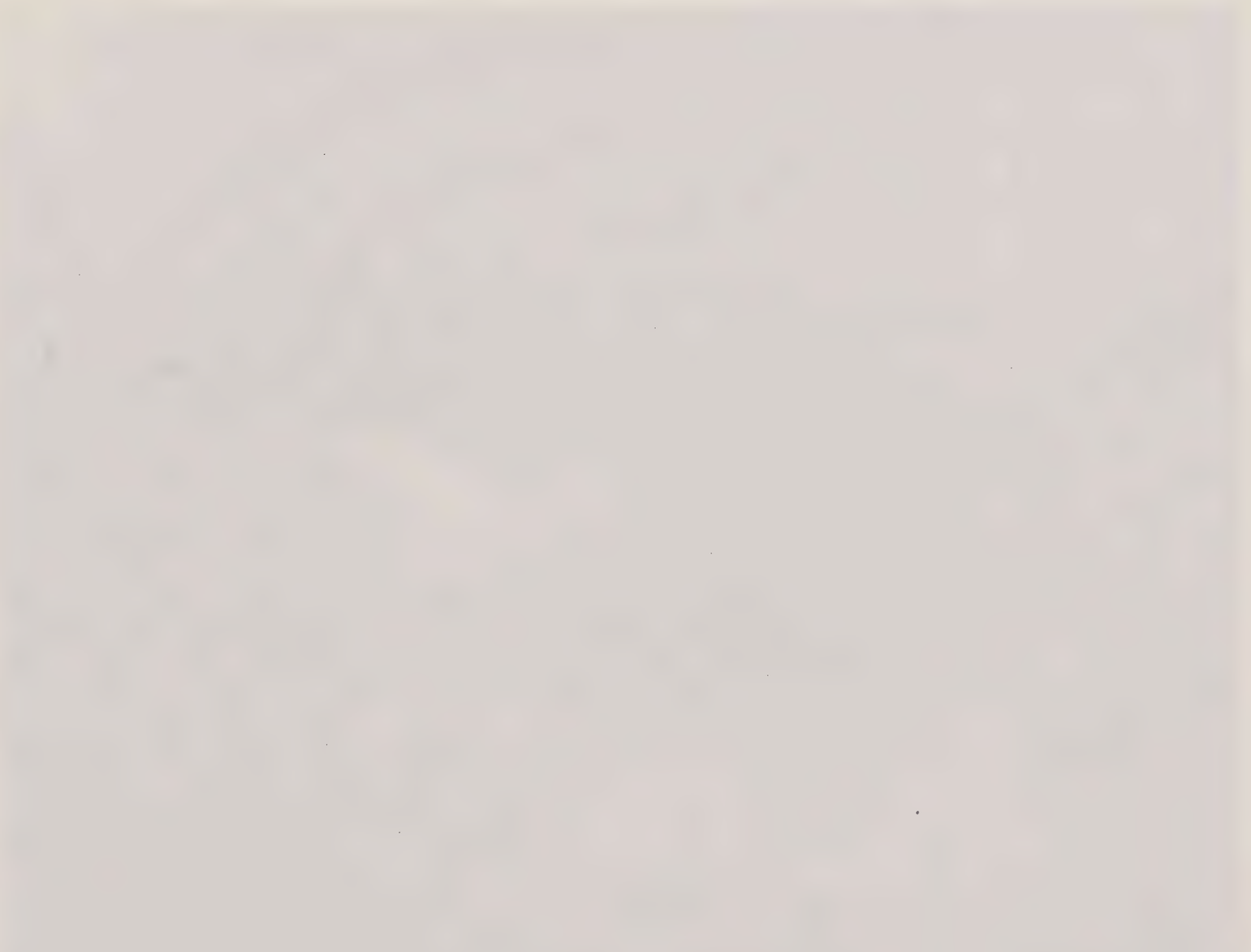
Why not do still better? Men of my age remember the extraordinary impression made by the retrospective display of paintings at the Exhibition of 1855. Those of a younger generation are yet under the spell of the great centennial manifestation of 1889, which caused us to forget the confusion and incoherency of the Fine Arts Section of the Universal Exhibition of 1878. The experiment has, therefore, been tried; and it was tried in 1855 and 1889 under difficult circumstances, that is to say, in rooms where the space was narrowly measured. The case is not the same at the Louvre. The large room at the end of the gallery overlooking the Seine would afford a great deal of space, and if the curator would, before this room is surrendered to the management of the national museums, remove all the doubtful canvases or those of no intrinsic value, we should have before our eyes not the richest in point of numbers, perhaps, but certainly the most admirable collection as a whole in the world.

ANTONIN PROUST.

Theodore Chassériau.

Chaste Susannah.

Negative by Braun, Clément & C



Gustave Courbet.

The Deer Cover.

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A. G. Decamps.

Bull-dog and Scotch Terrier.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

Eugene Delacroix.

The Massacre at Chios (1821).

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

Paul Delaroche.

The Death of Queen Elizabeth.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

Henri Regnault.

Portrait of General Prim.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

H. Reganault
Madrid
1869.

Théodore Rousseau.

Sunset in the Forest of Fontainebleau.

THE

GREAT MASTERS

IN THE

LOUVRE GALLERY

NAPOLEONIC SCHOOL

FIRST VOLUME

SECTION II.

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J. L. David.

The Coronation of the Emperor Napoleon.

THE NAPOLEONIC SCHOOL.

THE chief of the Napoleonic school of painting is Jacques Louis David, and, happily, a sufficient number of his pictures are at the Louvre to enable us to form a good idea of his work.

This great artist is a Parisian—which explains why he has neither a statue nor a memorial in his native city. He was born on August 30, 1748, on the Quai de la Mégisserie, in a family of merchants having numerous relations in the art world, for Boucher was an own cousin of David's mother. He lost his father, who was killed in a duel, when still a child, taught himself, and alone found his vocation; he wanted to be a painter, and was a painter, thanks to Boucher, who used his influence and recommended him to Vien. As early as 1771, having yet made only drawings and painted a few studies, but not a single picture, he competed for the Roman Prize and was placed second; the subject of the composition was the *Combat of Minerva Against Mars*. This work is at the Louvre, in the Eighteenth Century Gallery, where it is not out of place, for, having most of the defects of the school at that period it gives no promise of an innovator. Even when he obtained the Roman Prize, in 1774, and after his first sojourn in the Italian capital, David showed scarcely any personality. In 1783, he was in full possession of his talent as a portrait painter. Could anything be more animated, more life-like, of a truer impression or a firmer colouring than his portraits of M. Desmaisons, Alphonse Leroy, which is at the Montpellier Museum, and his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Monsieur and Madame Pécoul, which are at the Louvre? These two portraits were bought by the Government in 1844 at the price of 600 francs each.

Rarer still, not by its pictorial value but by its synthetic character and the amount of sentiment it reveals, is the portrait of Madame Chalgrin, bequeathed to the Louvre in 1892 by her grand-nephew, M. Horace Paul Delaroche-Vernet.

From 1784 David began to be an innovator, and he has firmly established his eminence in art. When he returned to Italy at the close of 1783, free from care, furnished with plenty of money by his father-in-law, and having an order from the French Government for a picture for which he was to receive six thousand francs, he took a studio in Rome, and for eleven months without other relaxation than the contemplation of masterpieces, worked upon his *Oath of the Horatii*, the subject and arrangement of the composition having been settled upon before his departure from Paris. Eleven months was a short time for the execution of so important a canvas, because, without speaking of his previous studies for this composition, he painted, so Drouais, his pupil, tells us, the left foot forward of old Horace twenty times before being satisfied with it. When finished, the painting was enthusiastically praised at Rome, and almost raised a disturbance at the Paris Salon of 1785.

The *Brutus,* which is at the Louvre, was exhibited at the Salon of 1789, at the same time as *Paris and Helen;* its success at that exhibition was due to political reasons, and the congratulations that David then received, together with the acquaintances formed with certain liberal writers, doubtless contributed a great deal towards pushing him into the political current, where he came very near perishing. The struggle that he then undertook against his colleagues in the Academy of Painting brought him more prominently into view and made him the avowed leader not only of the innovating artists but also of the revolutionists. This exploit turned his head and came near causing him to lose it. Still, from whatever point of view we estimate David's political career, we must not forget that the Revolution, in drawing his attention to contemporary subjects, caused him to execute a series of scenes in which he showed at once the extraordinary superiority already displayed in his portraits, and an art of composition and style acquired by the study of antiquity. As a proof of this we have simply to look at the sketch, at the Louvre, of *Taking the Tennis-Court Oath* (June 20, 1789) and the portrait of Bailly, which is only one of the preparatory studies of it; examine the Marat, the Barras, the Le Pelletier, all astonishing works in which we feel the shudder of the realistic, antique, declamatory, hideous and heroic Revolution!

By this experience David increased his powers to such an extent that he was able to render, without any loss of vigour, the most dramatic, the most touching and the most religious scenes from the history of his own time. Nor was this all. While in prison he meditated continually upon his art, and when he quitted the Luxemburg, where he had felt the grazing of death's wing, he carried away a work that could never perish, the sketch for *The Sabines*. During his solitude his taste had become still more refined and his resolution strengthened. Henceforth he would not bend to vain rules imposed by ignorance under the pretension of decency. He would no longer allow himself to be guided by the will of an amateur, by the criticism of a writer, and still less by the advice of a colleague. Alone with his personages he would struggle until the moment when he should feel and be assured of his triumph. This determination continued for two years; and little by little there appeared upon his immense canvas the crowd of nude figures, unharnessed horses, and, as an artist once said, "a complete dictionary of painting." In front of the Capitol he has ranged his two armies, the Sabines and Romans. Romulus, with his shield chiselled by the Divine Wolf, threatens Tatius with a javelin that he is about to throw; but Hersilia, daughter of one and wife of the other, rushes with outstretched arms between the combatants. All the Sabine women do the same, kneel and present their children. Already the struggle ceases and some of the old soldiers replace their swords in their sheaths. It would seem that we have here one of the most complete works of the French idealist school: a minute research in the drawing, a

J. L. David.

Portrait of Madam Pécoul, his mother-in-law.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

profound study of each figure, skill in composition, subordination of the details to the mass in movement and colour; yet all this is as nothing beside the fact that each one of the personages represents a type of humanity and realizes one of the external appearances of beauty. They are no longer individuals, but the source of individualities, formulas of maternity, force, youth, love, old age, at various degrees and in their manifold expressions. In this picture there are not simply personages designed and painted; there is, explained by a subject that furnishes at once the unity of the composition and the entire gradation of the sentiments rendered by the most perfect of all graphic means, the expression of every passion to which the historical fact represented could give utterance.

It was not the fault of General Bonaparte, of the First Consul, or of the Emperor, that *The Sabines* was placed only in 1819 at the Louvre among the masterpieces which then made the Napoleonic Museum the ornament and artistic splendour of Paris. As soon as he had the shadow of power, Bonaparte offered his influence to David. General-in-Chief of the Army in Italy, he proposed to him a refuge in his camp; pacificator of Europe, on his return from Campo-Formio and Rastadt he went to David's studio, and although averse to posing before artists, gave him a three hours' sitting. In those three hours was painted one of the finest and most inspired of David's works: that study where the head alone is boldly impasted on a fresh canvas, which the painter never dared to retouch or even finish; General-in-Chief of the army destined to operate against England, Bonaparte wished to take David to the East. First Consul, he at once placed at his disposal the gallery of the old Academy of Architecture, that he might there exhibit *The Sabines;* and three months after the revolutionary measure of November 9, 1789, in the following February, he named "Citizen David, Government Painter." David refused the place; he had no need of official favours in order to be at the master's bidding. "Bonaparte is a man to whom they would have raised altars in antiquity," said he to his pupils. "Yes, my dear friends, Bonaparte is my hero!"

Henceforth David devoted his whole time to his Napoleonic work. He had begun, several years before, his *Leonidas at Thermopylæ*, in which he intended to symbolize the heroic love of country; but the First Consul said to him: "What is the use of tiring yourself in painting vanquished heroes?" And some one added, for Bonaparte, "He prefers national subjects." So the *Leonidas*, already fixed in with colour, was set aside in a dark corner of

the studio and another canvas prepared. When the sombre days of defeat came David brought forth his unfinished picture, which was to serve as a lesson, a souvenir and an example.

David also gave up painting portraits, except those of a few intimate friends, such as Monsieur and Madame Mongez; this portrait is at the Louvre. Madame Récamier's portrait was abandoned; in an unfinished state; at the sale of David's studio, after his death, it was purchased by the Louvre for 6,180 francs.

We now come to the proclamation of the Empire. In the programme of the artistic part of the coronation, it was impossible to overlook David, who, at the grand ceremony at the Invalides had received from the Emperor's own hands the insignia of the Legion of Honour. By four important compositions he was to celebrate, consecrate and immortalize the foundation of the fourth dynasty; the episodes that he would choose were not only to present a complete reunion of the distinguished personages of the new government, but to symbolize the bases of this government, and thus add the attraction of a high philosophic idea to the interest of the subject. In *The Coronation* this idea would be religion; in *The Enthronement* it would be the accord of the elected chief and the great bodies of State for the glory and prosperity of the Republic; in the *Distribution of the Eagles* it would be the army; in the *Arrival at the Hotel de Ville,* the people of Paris. No programme was ever more admirably traced, from a pictorial and historical point of view, and if David had been able fully to carry out this programme—if, in the *Distribution of the Eagles* he had not been obliged by political considerations, and after repeated observations, to remove from his canvas two of the principal personages whose absence renders the work obscure and makes the admirable composition appear ordinary; if, in the same gallery, as it was the Emperor's intention, the four panels, each one having about 183 feet of measurement surface, had received this admirable series—what renown for the gallery, for the palace, and especially for the artist! It would have been Raphael, the Sistine Chapel and the Vatican!

The Coronation alone is sufficient for the painter's glory. What could be more life-like than the image of the Pope, which David had already painted in a portrait that is a master-piece? What could be better composed, truer to life, more solidly painted, more positive in expression than the group of ecclesiastical dignitaries that surrounds Pius VII.? Nothing would have been more ridiculous than these high officers with sergeants' heads and dressed as troubadours if treated by an inferior artist; here, not only is the masquerade invisible, but something new comes out of it: a conception of society and the style that is appropriate to it. The gesture and movement of the Emperor, and the kneeling posture of the Empress, are such admirable discoveries that, even though deformed by worthless reproductions, the image of one and the other remains; it is beautiful, noble, lasting. The whole of the right side of the picture is incomparably brilliant and powerful; the left side is weaker, dull, uniform. Yet how, in this part of the composition, could the master maintain the same degree of excellence? These satin costumes are unfavourable for painting, this indispensable mass of personages all claiming the best place, all wanting to be advantageously presented, all requiring retouches until they were perfectly satisfied; the fatigue of waiting, the worry over missed sittings, the strict observance of the rules of etiquette, the intervention of masters of ceremony placing their bee-covered staffs upon bits of painting, as at Barataria upon the dishes served by Sancho—was not all this enough to make the least patient of men lose patience? Besides, at one moment, the artist was obliged to open a gallery and place therein a lot of highnesses who were not even present at the coronation, being on that day eighteen hundred miles from Notre Dame.

F. Gerard (Baron).

Psyche.

Having been restored to grace they have the right to sit almost in the front row, and Josephine occupying a throne, they ought to be given at least an armchair. It was the same for Madame, the Emperor's mother, who was at Milan, and for the members of his household, which was not yet formed!

Even before the scenes of the coronation were sketched, David, by a decree dated December 17, 1804, had been appointed Chief Painter to the Emperor, with an annual salary of 12,000 francs; he received, besides, an advance payment of 25,000 francs on the price of his paintings, fixed by himself, and a monthly payment of 5,000 francs. On January 1, 1808, he had received 65,000 francs. At that date, 35,000 francs were ordered to be paid, but perhaps this sum was for the *Distribution of the Eagles*, as well as another order for 17,000 francs. The credits for this work had been fixed at 160,000 francs, but David's heirs declared that this sum had not been entirely expended.

David was recompensed still more by honours than by money. The details of a certain visit made by Napoleon, the Empress and their Court to David's studio are well known "That is not painting!" exclaimed the Emperor, as soon as he entered, "every one in the picture marches!" Then, after standing before the work and minutely inspecting it for an hour and a quarter, and finally being unable to express his admiration in words, he returned in front of David and, carrying his hand to his hat, rendered the imperial salute as he alone gave it, without a movement of the head, bringing down the hat to his breast. It was the salute he was wont to give to the flags blackened by powder, riddled by balls, and torn in glorious shatters. David's painting was also a victory that France, under his orders, had won on that day!

Then came public honours; the crowd, so happily painted by Boilly, rushing to the Exhibition and showing its enthusiasm in popular exclamations and eagerness constantly renewed; at

the Salon of 1808 the Emperor himself attached the golden eagle to the artist's breast in front of his picture, and charged Gros to make a painting of this interesting incident. What was still better, Napoleon had at that moment the idea of collecting in a special gallery, the David Gallery, all the works of his head-painter; and if he was unable to accomplish his project, it was because M. de Courbeton, brother-in-law and heir of M. de Trudaine, refused to give up the *Death of Socrates*.

Napoleon's good-will was a very high, very noble, and singularly efficacious patronage, but it was, at the same time, a very enlightened patronage. The Emperor, although not blind to his painter's merits, intended always to remain his own master; and never, despite David's renewed requests, would he consent to establish in his favour a sort of superintendence, or rather dictatorship, over art. When David did bad work, Napoleon plainly told him so. He once ordered of the artist a portrait in imperial costume for the large hall of the Genoa Tribunal, a portrait that was to be afterwards copied several times for different Italian cities. It was an important order from a pecuniary point of view. David, either from laziness or from a contempt too often shown by artists for official portraits, esteeming only the price they bring, simply made a sketch and confided its execution to one of his pupils, George Devilliers. It was the Emperor's invariable rule always to judge the merits of the portraits he ordered before giving directions for the payment of them. So this portrait, for which David demanded immediate payment, was taken to the palace at Saint-Cloud. Napoleon, after having examined the work, dictated the following note to his Master of the Household: "Monsieur Daru, I have just seen the portrait of myself made by David. It is such a bad portrait, and so full of defects, that I cannot accept it, nor would I send it to any city, especially in Italy, where it would give a very unfavourable idea of our school of painting."

By such lessons Napoleon knew how to keep each one up to the level of his duty. Was he less loved because he was better served? In any case, David remained steadfastly faithful to him. When he returned from the Island of Elba, the artist had finished his *Leonidas at Thermopylæ*, a work that was at once a solemn declaration of his patriotism and the protestation of his devotion. The Emperor gave him the decoration of Commander in the Legion of Honour, but as soon as the Bourbons came back he was, as an apostate regicide, proscribed by them and obliged to go into exile. His last years were spent at Brussels, where he worked unceasingly, even to an advanced age, keeping intact his talent, his enthusiasm and his precepts. With the exception of a copy of *The Coronation*, executed under his direction by Rouget, rather than painted by him, he made very few large pictures; he applied himself specially to portrait painting, and some of the portraits executed at that epoch are equal, if not superior, in accuracy, vivacity and character, to the most perfect ones signed by him. As an example we may cite the portrait of Madame J. Morel de Tanguy, *née* Rose van Thieghem, and her two daughters, which, after having been in the Van Praët collection, was bought by the Louvre at the Garnier sale for 12,600 francs.

Nearly all the idealist painters of the Napoleonic School were trained in David's studio; the strict and conscientious teaching imparted by the master formed all the great artists of whom France was so proud during the Restoration; it is this teaching, also, that has maintained for the last half century the respect for drawing, and for honesty in art, and the high and sublime tradition of the research of Beauty in Truth.

Without doubt, David's pupils have applied the master's doctrines according to the diversity of their different temperaments; without doubt, also, several among them have, by force of

F. Gerard (Baron).

Portrait of the Countess Reynauld de Saint-Jean-d'Angély.

circumstances, been obliged to disregard the austere rules taught by David, and have been, in consequence, without wishing to be, promoters of a decadence in art. Still, even at the height of their most brilliant successes they were troubled by the remorse of not having strictly observed the precepts of this teaching. Their ambition was not satisfied with titles, decorations, honours, nor with public applause and the high prices given for their works; everything was wanting if they failed to have the approbation of their conscience, and if they did not seem to hear the stammering voice of their master, saying: "That's it! Now you have it! You've done all you could!"

Girodet, Gerard and Gros were among the pupils who sometimes drifted away from the sound principles inculcated by David. This is not an extravagant statement. The day when Girodet was buried a certain number of successful, celebrated painters, members of the Institute, Barons and the rest, were assembled in the mortuary chamber. Gerard praised his dead comrade and regretted that he was no longer there to sustain the young artists by his example. "Why do you not replace him yourself, Gerard?" "That is what I ought to do," replied Gerard, sadly, "but I confess that I do not feel equal to the task; I am incapable of doing it." As for me," suddenly cried Gros in a trembling voice and with reddened eyes, "not only do I lack the authority to direct the school, but I must accuse myself of having been one of the first to set the bad example that has been followed of not selecting my subjects with all the care recommended by our master, and which he never ceased to show in every one of his works."

The pupil who, according to the almost unanimous opinion, most completely practised David's teachings, is not the most celebrated, and it can hardly be said that he was the most gifted as an artist. Singularly attracted by literary work, where he had but little success—as is shown by his poem entitled "Painting,"—captivated by a taste for music, where he was still less fortunate, Girodet de Roucy-Trioson possessed the decided qualities of a strong will and persistency. If, in the three paintings by him at the Louvre we can discover traces of fashion in the colouring, a little excess of anatomical research and of extraordinary movements, a disproportion in the size of the canvas with the subject, it is impossible to deny the science, skill, boldness and style of the drawing. If those who make it a rule to disparage Girodet were obliged simply to draw from nature a single one of the personages he has represented, or the smallest and most unimportant bit of his work, there would be a loud laugh, and not at Girodet's expense. A single fact is sufficient to show how conscientious he was in his painting. This artist, who, during his life obtained the greatest success,

could never consent to part with his pictures. It was only after his death, in 1818, that the Louvre was able to acquire, for 50,000 francs, *Endymion's Sleep,* which dates from 1792, the *Burial of Atala,* which, although exhibited only at the Salon of 1808, was painted about 1803, and *The Deluge,* which belongs to nearly the same period. Not one of his works ever seemed to him sufficiently perfect, and still less was he inclined to relinquish them. Of a violent and irritable temper, surrounded by a small circle of friends, convinced of his own merit, rarely accepting orders for portraits, and having some strange adventures with the originals of those he executed, he passed his days and nights in drawing and in seeking compositions, bringing to this work a desire for perfection that he often succeeded in attaining. It may truly be said that there is too much literature and not enough painting in Girodet's work. We have a proof of this in one of his most celebrated pictures, executed for the grand reception room at Malmaison, *Ossian's Warriors Welcoming the French Warriors,* a strange composition, which had a great vogue in its day, full of defects but showing an incomparable skill in design. At the Exhibition of 1810 his *Deluge,* a purely academic work, but, if we may say so, academically literary, won the prize with David's *Sabines;* and as for the *Burial of Atala,* it is scarcely possible to say whether it did not profit by the renown of Chateaubriand's novel. Large crowds went to see the picture. Lucien Bonaparte pretended to be its purchaser, and many engravings were made of it. The figure of Atala is, without any doubt, singularly graceful, those of Chactas and Father Aubry are faultless in design; but what need was there of placing upon a canvas of more than six feet by seven and a half a subject that might have been easily treated in average-sized dimensions! That was Girodet all over. He never proportioned the effort to the end to be attained; he exceeded it by excess of science and labour. He never perceived that he weakened his subject in magnifying it, and that he lessened it while believing to elevate it.

Nevertheless, with all his faults, and perhaps on account of them, Girodet would have been a very superior professor. Never passing over any imperfections of his own, he would not have overlooked those of others, and would have forced his pupils and the whole school itself to yield to a discipline that, while maintaining an absolute sincerity in drawing, would not have prevented the development of natural qualities. It may well be asked, however, in the absence of portraits that would enable us to judge—for the Louvre has only one very ordinary specimen—whether Girodet possessed that direct vision of nature which we cannot too much admire in David, and whether he really worked from nature. It would seem that, in his pictures at least, he belongs, in spite of himself, to the ancient school by adopting formulas which, although different, are in reality purer and more precise, and reveal a constant study of the antique; but these formulas proceed from an idealism *a priori* and not from an idealism *a posteriori,* as practised by David.

For these reasons, Girodet, notwithstanding the esteem due to him, does not appear destined to hold a place among the painters of the first rank; and for inverse reasons, it is the same with Gerard. This artist, who was born at Rome, in 1770, of French parents, came to Paris when he was twelve years old. He worked in several studios before becoming one of David's pupils. He competed twice for the Roman Prize without obtaining it, and his parents losing their fortune, he gave up further trial. To escape military service he was named, through David's influence, one of the jurors of the Revolutionary Tribunal; this gave him his liberty and enabled him, besides, to obtain a studio at the Louvre for his *August Tenth;* there he executed without any remorse his *Belisarius,* which was exhibited in 1795 and began his reputation. Immediately afterwards he painted his *Psyche.* Is it true that he wished in this picture to apply the doctrines of the "Primatifs," which were expounded in David's studio by Maurice Quay? These two types, certainly full of grace but not entirely without affectation, are the work of a good pupil, but not at all that of a renovator. They attracted the public, and especially women, by their

A. J. Gros (Baron).
Bonaparte at Arcola.

modern style. The women admired the face of Psyche all the more (there exist some very curious evidences of this admiration) as neither the drawing nor the execution surpassed the level of art they themselves attain at the first attempt, and which consists in finding beauty in an image that approaches their own, or at least the one it pleases them to show and with which it is customary to furnish them. Gerard was a great painter, according to their idea, because he promised to embellish them to their liking. However, these admirers carefully refrained from buying the *Psyche,* and Gerard might have died of hunger had not two of his friends, Fontaine and Darcet, acted as Isabey did two years previously for the *Belisarius.* After all, it was a good speculation as well as a kind action; bought for 6,000 francs, the *Psyche* was resold to General Rapp for 15,000 francs, and at the sale in 1822, the year following his death, it was purchased by the Louvre for 28,100 francs.

Gerard soon became the fashionable painter, sought after by all the high society, keeping up himself a luxurious train of living, and eager for a popularity that prevents the conception and execution of any great work. The women crowded to his studio, anxious to obtain sittings, and from 1800 to 1820 he painted eighty-four full-length portraits and more than two hundred smaller ones, without counting the repetitions and copies. The marvellous part of it is the skill he displayed, not only in posing, dressing and surrounding the persons of his time, but in preserving something of the character of his models notwithstanding his embellishments. Evidently, it was not a question with Gerard as it was with David, of inflexibly rendering nature; but there remains a sufficient amount of drawing and enough of strong studies to show that, despite the off-hand production and negligence, the artist possessed not only an astonishing facility but profound knowledge. Besides, Gerard appears to better advantage in his original sketches, which are at the Versailles Museum, than in many of his portraits, where all is not by his own hand. At the Louvre, even, it is not possible to form a judgment of his work. He has there only three portraits of women: one, admirable, that of the Countess Regnauld de Saint Jean d'Angély; another, very fine, that of Madame Visconti; the third, very poor, that of the Empress Maria Louisa, which is in the La Caze collection. To get an idea of Gerard's talent we need to have before us that prodigious series of canvases which is the history of France and almost that of Europe during a quarter of a century, and where, with a light and skilful hand, sometimes precocious and even hurried, he traced an image always agreeable and often exact of the men, and especially

the women, of his time. Here he never repeated himself, always finding some new, pleasing and ingenious arrangements for posing his personages or grouping the members of a family. All that was exquisite in the fashions, manners and aspects of the society of his day rests in his work, and only an artist moving in the best society would have been able thus to present it. For each one of his full-length, single-figure portraits he received 8,000 francs; with three or more figures the price went as high as 30,000 francs; half-length portraits cost 1,200 francs. And yet, if these prices represented good business affairs, the result, as far as glory is concerned, was moderate, for Gerard considered portrait-painting as an inferior branch of art, and always regretted his negligence in making an effort in historical painting. It was not Napoleon's fault that Gerard did not return to this nobler art; for the grand reception room at Malmaison the First Consul gave him an order for a composition to be drawn from the Ossian story, which was to form a companion-piece to Girodet's picture; then, as Emperor, he ordered for the ceiling of the Council of State Room at the Tuileries, the *Battle of Austerlitz,* a work that, in spite of its defects and colour, now become blackish, remains the artist's masterpiece, and merits a place where it could be seen under the conditions for which it was painted, with the four grand figures of History, Poesy, Victory and Renown unrolling the scroll of history from each side.

After this experience, Gerard was too accustomed to society, too tempted by the official world, too fond of invitations, titles, decorations, and too shrewd, also, not to return to the kind of work that had given him success and fortune, had flattered his vanity and secured him honours that men are too often tempted to consider as glory. He became, then, the official portrait-painter of the conquerors, and portrayed all the Chiefs of the Allies. He was the King's head-painter, and was created Baron and honoured with a quantity of decorations, medals and snuff-boxes. Still, in the midst of all these triumphs, he was haunted by the remorse of having abandoned the pure and noble art for a mercantile and official occupation; and thus it was, after having executed the *Entry of Henri IV. into Paris,* the *Coronation of Charles X., Corinne* and the *Duke of Anjou,* he began, with faltering hands and weakened eyes, to paint *Achilles Calling his Companions to Arms to Avenge Patroclus.*

With Gros, as we have seen, this self-reproach and anxiety were still more keen. And yet he was the author of *The Plague-Stricken at Jaffa,* the *Battle of Aboukir* and the *Battle of Eylau;* he was the master of colour and movement who had, perhaps, best rendered the entire series of "national subjects." Still, he was right when, in presence of Girodet's corpse, he confessed his inability to direct the French school of painting, and bring it back to the practice of sound principles. He could not do this because he did not know how to do it. He possessed all the gifts of his profession; he was a born colourist and had that strange faculty of being able to seize a movement and fix it upon the canvas. More than any other artist he was a painter, mixing and tempering his colour so as to render it firm and vivid. This skill is sufficient to stamp him as a great painter, but not enough to make him a great artist. When he began to study high art in David's studio the Revolution had already broken out, and to escape the call for military service he ran away. His father was dead and his mother reduced to poverty; he lived as best he could, first in the south of France and then in Italy, painting portraits here and there. Bonaparte came along. Recommended to Josephine by the Faypoults, who had met him at Genoa, Gros was called to the Serbelloni Palace to paint *Bonaparte at Arcola;* and to prevent the model's escape from the artist, Josephine was obliged to employ all her feminine resources of wheedling! Surely this portrait is illuminated with glory, victorious movement, and a superbly powerful impression; but how much it lacks the character and imagination of the simple sketch made by David! A copy of this portrait, painted by the artist, is at the Louvre. After Bonaparte, Gros painted Berthier, then Josephine and Madame Visconti. Becoming a favourite with the army, he reproduced the likenesses of generals and other officers in oil miniatures that are remarkable for their skill, colour and resemblance.

A. J. Gros (Baron).

Portrait of Lieutenant-General Count Fournier-Sarlovèze.

Is it not from this epoch that dates the portrait of Eugene Beauharnais, which is at Versailles, and which reveals in this infant's head the whole general staff of Mombello and Leoben?

After the treaty of peace, Gros returned to Paris with the intention of resuming his studies and seeking subjects for some great work: an *Alexander Taming Bucephalus,* a *Malvina,* a *Timoleon of Corinth.* He painted *Sappho at Leucate,* which is cold, dismal, bad, and even worse—indifferent. He was unable to feel, perceive or render antique subjects; he lacked the power to attain the definite serenity of pure beauty, of the beauty that is beyond the present and accidental formulas of humanity. It was necessary for him to see, for his eye to be brightened by a clash of colours, because it was by colour and movement that his ideas were awakened. It is generally thus with painters, the thought succeeds the colouring, just as with orators the words are consecutive to the thought. Happily, Bonaparte returned from Egypt, and Gros, who assumed a sort of prior right over him, immediately painted *The First Consul Distributing Arms of Honour.* Then he made a lot of official portraits, carried off the prize at the competition instituted to immortalize the *Battle of Nazareth,* and finally triumphed with *The Plague-Stricken at Jaffa.* The story is well known how, on the opening of the Salon, the pupils of all the studios marched in column to the Louvre and suspended a green palm under the picture. How glorious and gratifying was such a manifestation! And posterity has consecrated this mark of approval, for, beyond its leading quality of movement this work is, in composition and execution, the painter's masterpiece. The incident and the actors in this scene are familiar facts in history. Coming back from the unsuccessful attack on Saint Jean d'Acre, the French army returned to Egypt, where it was invaded by the plague. The discouragement became universal, and a panic ensued. The fear of the contagion was such that the sick were left without care, no one daring to touch them. Bonaparte, accompanied by his Chief of Staff, Berthier, and by Bessières, Commander of the Guides, went to the mosque at Jaffa, which had been transformed into a hospital, touched, handled and aided the unfortunate soldiers, gave precise instructions to his Commissary-General, d'Aure, and to his Chief Surgeon Desgenettes, who, in order to prove the innocuousness of the virus, injected himself with the matter from a tumour. The Emperor gave Gros 16,000 francs for this picture. The artist soon afterwards painted the *Battle of Eylau,* a subject for a competition held in 1807, and won by Gros. In this picture, Napoleon is represented visiting the battle-field, as he was accustomed to do, in order to estimate the extent of his

victory, and especially to have the wounded found and relieved. Wearing a gray pelisse bordered with fur, he stops in the middle of a group of wounded soldiers belonging to the enemy, who drag themselves towards him; the officers of his staff, Berthier, Murat, Soult, Davout and the rest, follow. From a documentary point of view it is permitted to prefer to this immense canvas, nearly twenty feet by twenty-six, a curious sketch of the same scene, made on the spot by Colonel Lejeune; we may also be allowed to think that Gros was here less happily inspired than in *The Plague-Stricken at Jaffa*, and still less than in the *Battle of Aboukir*, which was ordered from him by Murat, and in which he achieved a signal triumph in colour, movement, the swarming of men and the science of painting horses. This subject was one that suited him, and it was with the same ardour that he painted his portraits, most of them of the heroic kind, and generally equestrian, with horses rearing or galloping. Some of these portraits have a fine bearing — that of General Fournier-Sarlovèze, for example, which may be seen at the Louvre; in this portrait the model has the energetic and indignant expression of a soldier who refuses to surrender the city he commands; but in examining the work a little closer how many defects we find, and what hasty execution! These faults were scarcely noticed formerly, amid the blaze of fireworks set off in honour of this fantastical hussar; but the colour has darkened, and its charm has gradually disappeared; yet this portrait is the best preserved among all those he painted. The portrait of *General Lassalle* is quite black, and in the *General Montbrun* it is scarcely possible to distinguish a vague outline. The quiet, discreet and less fiery canvases have better resisted the action of time. Thus, not to go out of the Louvre, we may cite the portrait of Alcide de la Rivallière, and above all that of Catherine Boyer, first wife of Lucien Bonaparte, a work recently bought from Prince Gabrielli, at Rome, for 20,000 francs. This purchase fills very happily a gap in our national museum, which, up to the present, had no portrait of a woman by Gros; and it cannot be denied that he excelled in reproducing feminine beauty. This artist, who had a passionate temper, knew how to assume a suppleness and a charm that is surprising in a man of his power, and his comprehension of woman seems in contradiction to the attraction he usually felt for manly force. In his portraits of women Gros displays an unaccustomed sobriety, and a simplicity that contrasts strongly with the theatrical attitudes affected by this painter of iridescent stuffs and shining arms. He even knew how to make a fine picture of an indifferent subject ordered for the vestry of the Saint Denis church, *Francis I. and Charles V.* To give to this episode, which belongs essentially to incidental painting, an appearance and bearing that makes it almost an historical picture, he was obliged to display great skill, but it would be exaggerating his praise to say that the work is interesting. This painting, ordered by the Emperor, was paid for by Louis XVIII. in 1816; the sum given was only 10,000 francs. What Gros required in order to display all his qualities was the shock of battle, a thronging of the multitude, the impetuosity of a charge. Géricault, who was a good judge in such matters, said that in all painting there were only three horses: one by Raphael, one by Rubens and one by Gros. The rank, therefore, to which Gros is entitled is not an inferior one; yet, notwithstanding his gifts, the attraction he exercised as a colourist, the vigour of his execution, and, in certain parts, his skill in composition, all of which designated him as the painter of "national subjects," and attached his name to the Napoleonic epopee, Gros remains in the second rank, without having been able to raise himself to the first. By his aspirations he belongs to the idealist school, by his defects he became, almost in spite of himself, the head of another school; and if his first lineage is still glorious, we need not await

A. J. Gros (Baron).

Francis I. and Charles V. Visiting the Tombs at Saint Denis.

the second to find the drawing neglected, the composition abandoned, the artistic conscientiousness treated with contempt, and the idolization of what is called the temperament. As compared with his master, he is already on the wane, because he lacked a long, searching and profound study of nature, which forms neither the basis of his art nor the reason for his success; and despite the precept he enjoined upon his pupils, *design before colour*, it is the colour that makes the splendour of all his works. At present, after a century, it is still possible to appreciate his drawing, but no one can judge his colour; the colour we see has no relation with that fixed by the painter and seen by his contemporaries. Compare, for instance, with Gros's paintings the pieces of Gobelins tapestries executed at the epoch from these paintings. The tapestries are bright, warm and clear in colour, especially in the parts where the paintings are heavy, dull and black. The colour, in short, has disappeared from the canvases, the design alone remains. This design is inadequate, but it still exists; what will be the condition, in a hundred years, of works where, under pretence of colour, drawing is not even attempted?

Gros, by his example if not by his teaching, hastened the decline of the French school of painting. He felt this, and tried to remount the current. When he grew old he wanted to return to high art; he failed in the attempt, and, flouted by the new comers, who in many respects might have claimed him as their ancestor, became disheartened and killed himself.

Was there then, not one of David's pupils capable of arresting this decline? Pagnest could not be counted upon, for he died at the age of twenty-nine, without having had time to show all his capability, and leaving only a few fine portraits, which were exhibited at the Salons of 1814, 1817 and 1819. The best one, without any doubt, is that of Chevalier de Nanteuil-Lanorville, which created a sensation in 1817. Some of the amateurs of that time went so far as to say that this portrait was equal, if not superior, to a Van Dyck. The Louvre possesses this portrait, as well as that of General de Salle, a bit of well-worked painting, solid and bold, a brilliant promise, but one

that enables us to conclude that if Pagnest had lived he might have been Gros's rival rather than a continuator of David's teaching.

David had a continuator in his school: it was M. Ingres. "At first disavowed for a long while, unnoticed but persevering in his course with an admirable determination, M. Ingres," wrote Theophile Gautier in 1855, "has today reached the rank where posterity will place him, by the side of the great masters of the sixteenth century, whose spirit he seems to have inherited after three hundred years; a noble existence to take as an example, and one that art has entirely filled without relaxation, faltering or doubting. Voluntarily imprisoned in the sanctuary after having walled up the door, the author of the *Deification of Homer*, the *Saint Symphorien* and *Louis XIII.'s Vow*, has lived in the ecstatic contemplation of the Beautiful, kneeling before his idols, Phidias and Raphael; pure, austere, fervent, meditating and leisurely producing the works that are the witnesses of his faith, he now alone represents the high traditions of history, of the ideal, and of style. On account of this he is accused of not being in touch with the modern spirit, of not seeing what is going on about him, of not belonging to his generation. No accusation was ever more just; no, he is not of his generation, but he is eternal. His sphere is that wherein the personifications of the highest beauty move, the transparent and blue ether breathed by the Sybils of the Sistine Chapel, the Muses of the Vatican and the Victories of the Parthenon."

This is the point of arrival; but ought we to neglect the starting point now that we have it before our eyes? If M. Ingres was an *idealist*, it was without wishing to be. He detested the word, and pretended to study and seek nature solely. If he exerted himself towards the Beautiful, it was because "the Beautiful is only the expression of the True." How much we regret that it is impossible here to mark his progress, and by examples that abound, follow the development of his work in his drawings, his portraits and his compositions. Why is there not an Ingres Gallery at the Louvre, near the David Gallery? Calumniated during his life and up to his last days by certain journals that sought success by insulting prominent personages, M. Ingres ought all the more to be glorified as we are at present able to judge the men by comparison with whom his enemies thought to belittle him. We must take him out of the circle of such persons, where he seems to have wandered, like a pure soul, in bad company, and place him with those who were his masters and his rivals, with those who, like himself, professed and practised the worship of Beauty in Truth.

The Louvre has fifteen paintings by M. Ingres, including nine compositions of various importance, and six portraits. Among these portraits we must put aside that of Cherubini, an "historical portrait," as it is called; this work is an attempt that is more interesting than successful, perhaps, towards a concordance of the antique and the modern manner. It is, besides, badly crackled, and a part is already destroyed. But what can be said of the five other portraits? They are: the portraits of Monsieur and Madame Rivière, painted in 1804 and bequeathed to the Louvre in 1870; those of M. Cordier and M. Bochet, painted in 1811, the one bought in 1878 and the other given in 1886; and finally, the portrait of M. Bertin, editor of the *Journal des Débats*, painted in 1832 and purchased for 80,000 francs in 1898. The portrait of Madame Rivière marks the beginning of M. Ingres's career (he was then only twenty-four); that of M. Bertin shows us the artist in full maturity. Perhaps it may be thought that, if in one of these portraits the expression of the model is more happily rendered, if certain of the technical parts are more skilfully treated, the other portrait is more life-like, more near the reality, and its character in many respects superior because the artlessness is greater. Is this

J. A. D. Ingres.
The Source.

an illusion on our part? In recalling our souvenirs, which are already far remote, dating back thirty years, it seems that formerly the colour in M. Bertin's portrait was fresher and clearer, whereas now it is dark. On the other hand, Madame Rivière's portrait has lost none of its qualities and can lose none; it remains in its disquieting beauty like a Clouet or a Holbein.

Perhaps the Bertin portrait owes its great reputation to the fact that it is more accessible to our judgment. How

real, life-like and pre-

cise, how true to its

time, how well it in-

carnates the *Journal*

des Débats, then at the

height of its influence,

and the bourgeosie, the

middle-class, in full

reign! Here we have

the middle-class, with

its intelligence, its

force, its vulgarity and

its pride, so materially

and philosophically real

that the portrait ceases

to be the image of a

man in order to be-

come the symbol of an

epoch. The portrait of

Madame Rivière, as

well as that of Madame

Devauçay, at Chantilly,

requires a greater effort

and more study; but,

as we penetrate the

mystery of the work,

it fastens itself in our

memory and besets us.

It is the person her-

self, the one who is

dead, but whose living

image remains, the un-

known being whose

history we shall never

know, yet about whom

there will always exist

an unceasing curiosity,

while she, eternally

silent, will continue

for centuries to tan-

talize us like the

sphynx with her teasing

enigma.

It is not necessary to discuss at length

M. Ingres's easel pic-

tures. In order to live

he was obliged to paint

some, but he never

succeeded with anec-

dotal subjects. Anti-

quity, the Middle Ages,

the sixteenth century

and even modern sub-

jects were not more

successful in his hands.

He was made, like

David, for covering, in

a glorious order, large

wall panels in palaces

and temples with great

men and gods. When

he placed a nude figure

upon a canvas he co-

vered it entirely; when

he encumbered the canvas with a quantity of small personages he left it vacant. Examine the two pictures bequeathed to the Louvre by Count Duchâtel: *OEdipus Solving the Riddle,* which was painted in 1808, and *The Source,* which dates from 1856. To produce its impression of beauty and terror the first work has no need of the man in the distance running away terrified, which M. Ingres persisted in keeping because, he said, it was "Poussinesque." The second painting, although much heavier than the first study for it, made several years before, which, according to good judges, was a most admirable piece of work, needs no accessories to fill its

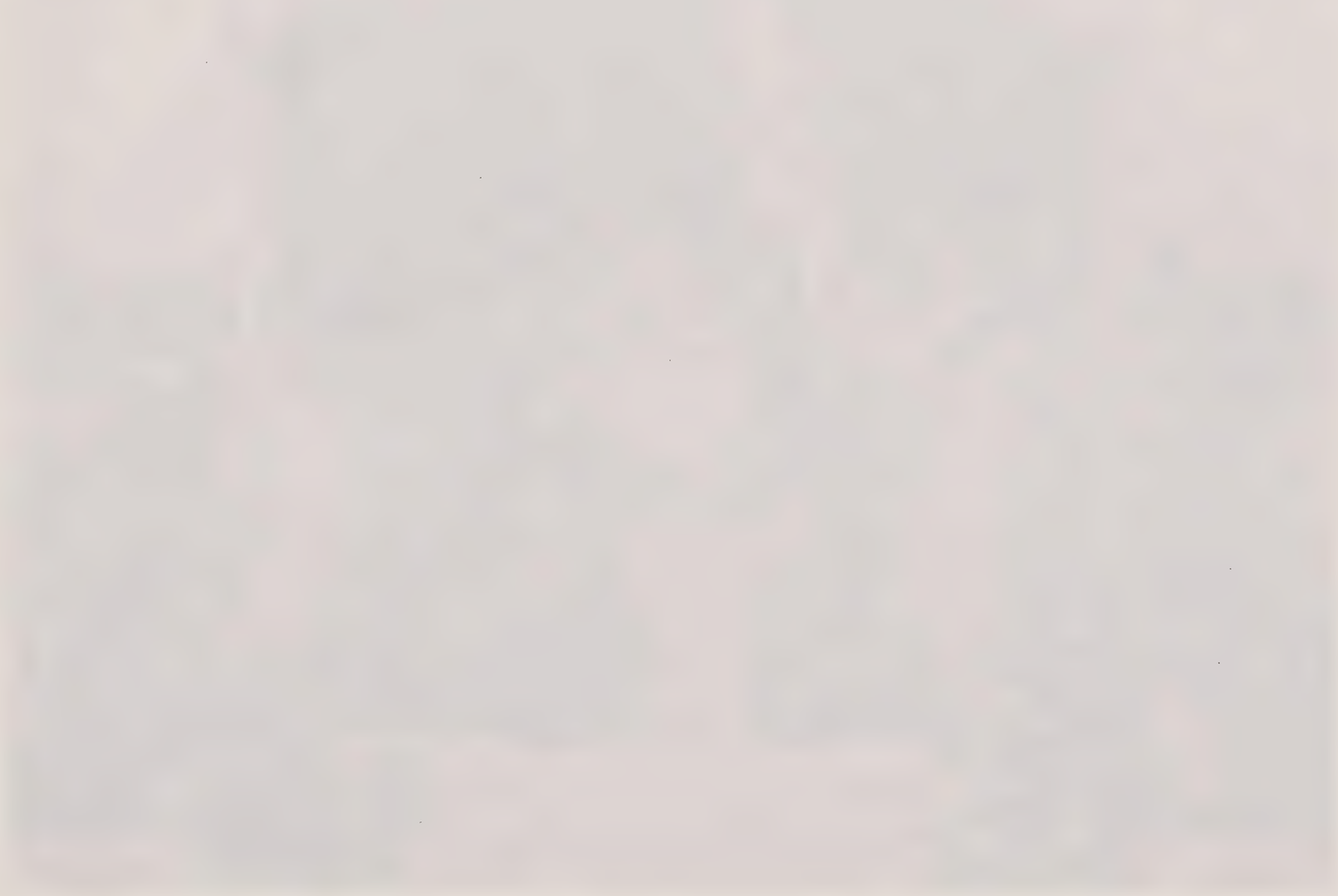
space. The same may be said of *A Bather*, painted about 1827, and bought from M. Pereire in 1879 for 20,000 francs. M. Ingres thus shows the full power of his art, the sureness of his hand and the impeccable accuracy of his eye. But there remained one more degree to obtain, and he reached it. For want of the *Deification of Napoleon*—without contradiction the finest and most inspired of all his works, destroyed in 1871, which prevents our judging its merits otherwise than from the sketches and drawings of it—the Louvre at least possesses the *Deification of Homer*.

In this work, which, by the dignity of the composition, the elevation of the idea and the firmness of the drawing, is almost equal to the masterpieces in the Vatican, M. Ingres was not satisfied with simply showing the incomparable force of his talent, the purity of his art, the quality and chaste grace that he excelled in giving to his feminine figures; by the reunion and grouping of all the historical personages of every epoch with imaginative and allegorical beings, he not only accomplished a return to the traditions of the sixteenth century, which, in 1827 might seem audacious, but he did more, and better. Charged, as he believed, to translate in painting the lines of Marie Joseph Chenier:

.... Trois mille ans ont passé sur les cendres d'Homère,
Et depuis trois mille ans Homère respecté
Est jeune encor de gloire et d'immortalité,

he proclaimed in this apotheosis, and in an imperishable manner, his profession of artistic and literary faith, what we may call the Symbol of Idealism. In front of an Ionic temple, Homer, with his golden sceptre in hand, is seated upon a golden throne. A goddess draped in a pink mantle descends from heaven to remit to him the palm and crown; at his feet are seated his two immortal daughters, the Iliad and the Odyssey, one holding Ulysses's oar upon her knees, and the other girded with Achilles's sword. Upon the steps of the temple the poets and artists of all times are ranged, in order to render their homage to the old man of Chios; to the left, Hesiod pouring incense upon a tripod, Æschylus offering the roll of his tragedies, Apelles conducting Raphael, Virgil leaning upon Dante; in the foreground, seen at half-length, Tasso, Corneille and Poussin; to the right, Pindar touching his grand ivory lyre, Plato conversing with Socrates, Phidias presenting his mallet and chisel, Alexander with the casket in which he carried the divine poems; in front, Camoens, Racine, Molière, Fénelon. All this is beautiful because it is logical; but one person, David, is wanting. Even though dead, his ashes were proscribed, and the *Deification of Homer* was destined for the ceiling of one of the galleries in the Charles X. Museum; still, would it not have been noble for M. Ingres, when he retouched the composition and made certain changes therein, to have given a place to his master, and thus affirmed his filiation and his gratitude? But if M. Ingres was a master painter, his character was not equal to his talent; thus, the artist who refused to acknowledge his teacher, did not exercise the active influence in art he might have exercised, and if he formed some admirable pupils (Flandrin, Chassériau and others), he did not create any descendants. He left to Gros's pupils, less prepared and not receiving the traditions direct from the master, the honour of perpetuating the teaching of high art and of sustaining in the midst of invading barbarism the holy religion of the Beautiful.

During the Napoleonic period various artistic personalities sprang up beside the David school; a few had some features in common with David or his pupils, the others were so different in character that they had no need of any master, and seemed to have no ancestors, or even imitators.



J. A. D. Ingres.

The Deification of Homer.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

Isabey belonged to David's studio, and although he left it with a very different talent from the one he went there to seek, he merits none the less to be mentioned; he is in miniature painting what Gerard was in portraits, and some of his drawings are admirable. The large water-colour miniature, the *Louvre Staircase*, so precious as a document for the place, the costumes, the interest of the subject, the brilliancy of the colour and the skill in treatment, does not give a sufficient idea of his taste; he applied this taste to everything, to armorial bearings, scenes, ceremonies, costumes, portraits, and in all these he shows superiority. Still, Isabey does everything as though it were an amusement, and represents everything as an amusement; the result is that it has taken a long while for the public to judge the artist himself in any other manner.

Géricault studied in Vernet's studio, and afterwards with Guérin, and yet he descends only

from Gros; his cavalry officer's horse originated in Gros's stud, and his dead on the Medusa raft come from the mosque hospital at Jaffa. For that matter, Géricault never concealed his admiration for Gros, and carried still farther his respect for David, whom he called "the first among our artists, the regenerator of our school." What would Géricault have produced had he lived longer? Would he, in spite of his inclinations, and because of his lack of education, have adopted some of the romantic absurdities? It is possible, although he had already studied more and was more conscientious than some of his comrades. In any case, he was not able to show all his capability, for he died at the age of thirty-three and was in poor health during the two preceding years. If the catalogue of his works, compiled with minute care, contains a list of more than five hundred paintings, sculpture, engravings and

lithographs, many of these are youthful attempts, and even among the eighteen pictures received at the Louvre several would look very well in an amateur's collection, but are out of place in a national museum. *The Medusa's Raft,* the *Light Cavalry Officer of the Guards,* the *Cuirassier* and the *Epsom Races,* are the only ones of Géricault's works that may be called superior.

The *Light Cavalry Officer of the Guards* has qualities that we do not find elsewhere, and defects that we see everywhere in Géricault's work. The origin of this picture is curious: the artist, while on his way to the Saint-Cloud out-door festival, saw a gray horse harnessed to a large furniture van; full of animal spirits and not accustomed to such a vehicle, the horse was rearing in a cloud of dust under a burning sun. This was just the subject that Géricault wanted. He at once made a sketch of the scene, and painted the picture in a back-shop on the Boulevard Montmartre, in the short space of three weeks; the canvas measures nearly ten feet by seven. One of the artist's friends, Lieutenant Dieudonné, posed as the cavalier. Exhibited at the Salon of 1812, then again in 1814, with the *Wounded Cuirassier,* the painting was afterwards bought by the Duke of Orleans, later on King Louis Philippe, and at the sale of his property after his death, it was purchased by the Louvre for 23,400 francs. *The Medusa's Raft,* which must be mentioned, since it is considered as Géricault's masterpiece, cannot now be judged as it was formerly; first of all because the political passion that made its success has died out, and next because the increasing dimness of the colour prevents our distinguishing the extraordinary difficulties, after the manner of Michael Angelo, that the young artist feigned to execute. The subject of this picture is well known: on July 2, 1816, the frigate *Medusa,* on her way to Senegal, ran ashore on a sand bank, owing to the unfitness of her commander, a refugee officer who had been reinstated in the navy with a higher grade without having navigated for twenty-five years. A raft was constructed, which was to be towed by the ship's boats, full of officers and sailors, while on the raft were one hundred and fifty soldiers, most of them having belonged to the Grand Army. The raft was abandoned by the boats, and when, after thirteen days of agony, the brig *Argus* sighted it by chance, there remained only fifteen dying men. No disaster ever caused more excitement; all the opponents of the new government tried to make political capital out of it. Géricault, who went a good deal into Bonapartist society and frequented Vernet's studio, made a painting of the scene, which was exhibited at the Salon of 1819, and classed as a masterpiece after the artist's death. Géricault had decided, according to his contemporaries, "not to use in his colouring any tone out of the scale going from white to black; there are a few reds, greens and blues, but they are scarcely noticeable, being muffled, deadened and lost in the sombre and monochromatic harmony of the whole composition." This gave the painting a murky aspect, which has thickened with time. Then, is it because the artist used a greasy oil so dry that he was obliged to finish each day the part of the picture began on that day, as it would not have been possible to make any retouches twenty-four hours later? Is it because the picture was varnished before it was thoroughly dry? Is it because the canvas has been rolled and unrolled so many times for exhibition in England and elsewhere? For whatever reason, this great decorative painting has become, after sixty years, so black that today we are obliged to admire it on credit.

It may seem strange that after having conceived and executed this painting as a work of political opposition, Géricault should have ardently solicited the purchase of it by the Director of the National Museums. The government could hardly be expected to show much eagerness to buy and exhibit a work that stigmatized the refugees belonging to the royal navy and the sovereign who employed them. The Minister of the Fine Arts refused to make the purchase,

J. L. A. Th. Géricault.
The Epsom Races.

but, thinking that Géricault might be in want of money, although he was rich, gave him an order for a religious painting, to cost 6,000 francs. Géricault accepted the order, had Delacroix paint the *Sacred Heart,* collected the money, but continued his requests for the purchase of *The Medusa's Raft,* which had just brought him in 17,000 francs from an exhibition at London. M. de Forbin, who was then Director of the National Museums, took the matter in hand. "No painter," said he in one of his reports, "without any exception, since Michael Angelo, has been called upon to feel and render scenes of terror in a more powerful manner than Géricault," and he insisted three times without succeeding in obtaining the 6,000 francs asked for by Géricault. It was only at the sale after the artist's death that M. de Forbin was finally able to satisfy his own desire and, by a series of combinations, acquire for the Louvre, at the

price of 6,005 francs, a painting which, on account of its dimensions (16 by 23 feet), could scarcely have found a welcome in any private collection.

The *Epsom Races* was painted in England in 1821, and, to tell the truth, does not show any considerable progress over the pictures executed by Géricault during the preceding eight years. The *Light Cavalry Officer* and the *Wounded Cuirassier* are the most personal and brilliant works of a painter that the School of 1830 can claim as an initiator, much more than the Napoleonic School can classify among its disciples. Géricault forms the tradition between Gros and Delacroix; he is a romanticist of the first hour, but has nothing of an idealist.

If, in the Seven Chimneys Gallery the Géricaults do not appear to be in their right place, does this mean that the works of the David School cannot suffer any others at their side, and that in the days when this school flourished no artist came to light outside its walls? There is one painter at least whose complete work shows and affirms an entirely opposite theory, who belonged to no school, who

could not have any imitators, who studied and trained himself in solitude, who differs from his contemporaries in everything, and who, by the side of the most illustrious artists, could not lose anything, but, would on the contrary, receive more splendour; for, if the others aspire to render pure beauty in chaste and divine nude figures, Pierre Paul Prudhon, enveloping, and as it were bathing, his figures in a silvery light, impregnates them with all the grace, tenderness and voluptuousness that stirs our being. "This artist," said David, "has his own style; he is the Boucher, the Watteau of our time. Let him work in his own way; he is mistaken, but every one is not permitted to deceive himself in the same manner. He has a fine talent; but what I cannot pardon in him," continued David, smiling, "is that he always makes the same heads, arms and hands. His figures always have the same expression, and this expression is always the same grimace. It is not thus that we other disciples and admirers of the ancients ought to regard nature."

Without doubt, David believed that he was much more "antique," and yet we may be allowed to ask if we do not get from some of Prudhon's compositions a more solid, spirited, life-like and more thoroughly sensual, human notion of antiquity than from David's works? One seems to model his personages after Marie Joseph Chénier's verses, the other upon those of André Chénier; and which of the two brothers has the advantage? André draws his inspiration uniquely from antique art, while Marie Joseph absorbs the soul of antiquity itself. There is no archæological research, no exactness in the draperies painted by Prudhon; they belong to no epoch and no country, and simply reveal of the feminine form only what is necessary to awaken desire. Prudhon's female figures bathe in an atmosphere of voluptuousness; their faces are not beautiful and contain not a single pure line; the mouths are large, the eyes deeply set and veiled, the foreheads low, the hair negligently twisted in wild curls; but these faces express tenderness, they tremble with joy, live and die by love. And how he has shown all the perfections of their forms, how he has followed all their movements, how he has excelled in rendering their attitudes! His work is a love poem, each verse of which is a song in praise of woman!

Prudhon is, and will always remain, the painter of woman. For him she has no need of being a real, existing creature; he alone has succeeded in fixing her outside of place, time and space; he has deified her and set her in the heavens. After having made her a creature of voluptuousness, he has made her a being of allegory and revery. All that men's imagination has conceived as divine and sacred under woman's traits — Virtue, Muse, Goddess — he has incarnated and embodied. No artist so well as he has launched ceiling figures into the immortal, celestial spaces; they mount and pass with a divine volitation. Certainly they are not Christians; there is nothing religious, visionary or even esthetic about them; but they possess something of antiquity that contrasts so agreeably with the modern style of their heads, their circled eyes, their voluptuous mouths and their sensual bodies, that they give us an impression unlike any to be found either in the art of Prudhon's time or in the art of all time.

Prudhon is badly and poorly represented at the Louvre. The *Abduction of Psyche,* bequeathed in 1888 by Madame de Sommariva, alone gives an example, although poor and inadequate, of what he was able to do. On the other hand, a good specimen of the real woman and of the voluptuousness he attributed to her, is the portrait of *The Empress Josephine,* which belonged to Napoleon III., and which, sequestered in 1870, was, according to an administrative euphemism, "assigned to the Louvre by arbitration in execution of a judgment rendered by the Civil Tribunal of the Seine, February 12, 1879." After this first and best example, we may mention the portrait of *Madame Jarre* and that of *Mademoiselle Lagnier*, both bequeathed to the Louvre, and finally, a portrait of a young man, ascribed to Prudhon, and bought at a public sale in 1895 for 13,850 francs.

A decisive example of Prudhon's work is furnished by his composition that was first destined for the hall of the Criminal Court in Paris. In this painting, while preserving all his qualities of grace, envelop-

P. P. Prudhon.

Portrait of the Empress Josephine.

ment and softened light, Prudhon has known how to rise to style, to furnish an impression of sacred horror, to give to the symbol its majestic severity and to draw a contrast between these allegorical figures that hover so proudly in the nocturnal sky and the difficult flight of the brutal murderer, which is almost the same type that he represented in his *Thirst for Gold*. Curiously enough, whenever this painter of woman does not "feminize" man, whenever he does not give him the graces, the rotundity and almost the face of a woman, he rarely ever presents him otherwise than as a frightful, lugubrious and abject being, an instrument of devastation and horror; and in the admirable picture at the Louvre it is woman, the Angel of Vengeance, who seizes man by the hair and drags him, panting and rebellious, to the feet of another woman, Justice!

We must not ask Prudhon to give us subjects from real life or historical scenes; his *Meeting of Napoleon I. and Francis II.* is a pitiable painting. His Virgin in *The Assumption* is not Christian; she is a work-girl, and the angels that surround her are disconcerted cupids. If, owing to the liberties he has taken and the lighting he adopted, his *Christ Upon the Cross* is superior, how much better he would have painted the death of Adonis! However, is it necessary to complain so much of these official works? If, under the Empire all the subjects were military, and under the Restoration religious, after this experience those in authority knew how to give to each artist the work appropriate to his talent. To judge of the part confided to Prudhon we must examine the ceilings in the Gallery of Antiquities, in the Diana Gallery, and the project for the grand staircase at the Louvre, the ceilings at the Saint Cloud palace, the sketches for Maria Louisa's toilet and for the King of Rome's cradle. It was not Prudhon's fault if decorative art, which had become heavy and gross after the admirable models of the Consulate, was not superbly renewed in a different formula. Thanks to him and to those who stimulated him, the imperial palaces have been enriched with masterpieces, and there remain to us the images of women who filled Napoleon's heart—Josephine and Hortense—images which, although not official, are yet the only ones that reveal their elegance and charm.

The imperial epoch has not only produced historical painters, painters of the nude figure and of what is called "big machines," which require immense wall space and palace ceilings; there thrived in that time a crowd of painters of small pictures, excelling in anecdotal scenes and all the realism of the street and home. There were also costume painters, those who tried historical anecdotes, painters attracted and tempted by the Museum of French Monuments, and who by the *troubardism* that it is the fashion to ridicule, were the direct introductors to this romanticism that it is the custom to admire. It is almost in

vain, however, that we look for them at the Louvre, where their place is marked, not in the front rank without doubt, but by the side of, if not above, those who have succeeded them. Taunay has only his *Peter the Hermit*, quite outside of his means, habits and tastes. If De Marne is represented by three pictures that give an idea of his manner, there is nothing by Swebach, Van Brée, Richard, Duperreux, Madame Chaudet, Mademoiselle Gerard, and how many others!

Boilly has only one painting. It is true that this composition can pass as his masterpiece, but would the *Departure of the Conscripts of 1807*, or the *Exhibition of the Paintings of the Coronation*, have done any harm to the *Arrival of the Diligence*? And in the five or six thousand portraits that Boilly is said to have executed, each one of which did not take him more than two hours to paint, these portraits so exact, so animated, so powerfully and intelligently modelled, is it possible that there is not one at least that might figure at the Louvre? Surely, the *Arrival of the Diligence* is an admirable and curious scene of manners and customs which, to the amusement of recalling a corner of old Paris, adds that of showing the costumes, uniforms and fashions. It is, besides, a solid and clear piece of painting that has lost nothing in growing old, and remains such as it was when it left the artist's hands; but is it not regrettable that it is unique of its kind? It was not a fashionable picture; if it was bought in 1845 it was as a sort of charity that the purchasers gave two thousand francs to Boilly's heirs. The Louvre will now be obliged to pay for these paintings; the least they bring is 30,000 francs.

Carl Vernet merits to be named not far from Boilly, although he is certainly inferior to him in technical skill. He has no right to be considered as glorious because he tried to fix small pictures on large canvases, but he deserves a mention because, an amusing caricaturist, he was a painter of hunting and sport, and some of his documentary pictures are agreeable and accurate. The only work at the Louvre by Carl Vernet, *Stag Hunting*, is of lively interest, as it gives us some notions about the various equipages of the royal hunting-train, information concerning the fashions and some curious portraits. It must have attracted considerable attention at the Salon of 1827, and many persons will think that Charles X. did not pay its real value in giving 8,000 francs. Even today the painting is full of movement and remains a society picture; the old fashions that it shows us are coming back again after having for a long time lost their vogue. This doubtless explains the renewal of success obtained recently by the exhibition of the works of the three Vernets; but it is to be feared that their too eager admirers will crush these artists by the exaggerated puffing they lavish upon them.

M. Heim would much better deserve to be praised if it were here a question of talent, drawing and painting. His picture of *Charles X. Distributing the Prizes at the Salon of 1824* has all the interest and awakens all the curiosity that we can expect from this kind of painting. The official history of the Restoration can scarcely be represented otherwise than by portraits, for if some of the personages of that epoch are interesting their acts were insignificant; the artists and literary men have more chance of lasting than the Court people, and in the throng they merit notice. Near Viscount de la Rochefoucauld and Count de Forbin, the spectator will look for Carl Vernet, to whom His Majesty has just handed the ribbon of Saint Michael; Cartelier, around whose neck the king passes the insignia; Gros, Regnault, Madame Haudebourg, all the illustrious artists of that time — and in the number how many are unknown today! Heim excelled in giving to each one the truest and most exact profile. Contrary to Carl Vernet who, gifted with a premature facility, had acquired nothing by study, Heim knew; he had received in Vincent's studio a similar teaching to that imparted by David; he had obtained the Roman Prize in 1807; then, immediately after his return from Italy, he had been engaged by Denon among the young artists who were to reproduce in drawings or in water-colours the episodes of the Emperor's campaigns. There exists a certain number of these designs made by M. Heim, all of them astonishingly true, of grand air and full of movement. The Louvre even possesses a series of crayon portraits of members of the

F. J. Heim.

Charles X. Distributing the Prizes at the Salon of 1824.

Institute, which, by the boldness of the manner and the exactness of the summary execution, give a singular impression of reality. In the painting of the distribution of the prizes, the quality of the design is a little dulled by the official character of the picture, but enough reality remains to make it one of the most valuable documents of manners and customs.

In a lower rank than M. Heim, but one that many of his contemporaries would be glad to hold after a hundred years, Martin Drolling claims his place. We have here no longer to do with a painter of the aristocracy, of the Institute, of society or of sport; Drolling is the painter of the lower middle-class, the nearest to the masses, the class in which the artist had always lived and which suited his intelligence just as he suited it by his talent. What he did was not very high art, yet it was finished, clever, exact and detailed; it was an art that gave a desired sensation of serenity, repose and mediocrity,

but an art that in itself is not so inferior, with its skilful arrangement of light, the ingenuity even with which nature is copied, and a reality so profoundly felt that it rises almost to a symbol. Martin Drolling came to Paris from Strasburg without a cent in his pocket, but with the intention of being an artist. Of the seven or eight hundred pictures he painted from 1781 to 1817, the Louvre possesses only one, *A Kitchen Interior,* bought as a deed of charity for 4,000 francs from the artist's son. This picture is sufficient for us to judge of Drolling's work, for he was not a genius; he neither progressed nor fell back, and if he varied his subjects he scarcely changed his method.

Of artists of this rank, painters of easel pictures and anecdotal subjects, there was a large number in Napoleon's time, as well as portrait painters, animal and still-life painters, for every one was an amateur and everybody ordered and bought pictures. To begin with the Emperor, who filled galleries and hung paintings in all the rooms of all his palaces, who ordered canvases by the thousand yards—we cannot express the fact in any other way; then followed the two Empresses, the kings,

princes, marshals, generals and dignitaries of all rank; it was, in fact, an orgie of painting, portraits of all sizes, from the miniature that was worn in a scarf pin to the sedate full-length; paintings of all kinds and dimensions, all of which were imperially paid. This last fact did not create an artistic value for them, and there are some that might be cited as an example of the reverse; but in those days it was for their pleasure and gratification that court and society people bought paintings, and not through snobbishness or the hope of making a good bargain. A general taste for art filled the atmosphere; everybody had seen so many masterpieces and compared so many paintings; artillery generals wrote treatises on art; every one tried to instruct himself by pictures, to distinguish the different schools and to compose a collection. Mistakes were sometimes made, for fashions change; still, a fashion that tends towards the Beautiful and aspires to masterpieces is not so common. Some amateurs aimed high, and wanted among the ancients only the Italian masters of the Renascence, and among the moderns their disciples and those who imitated them. Others preferred small paintings, seeking the Dutch and Flemish artists, who never had such a vogue, and prized among the contemporaneous painters those who followed their manner. But all started from one idea, if not from a knowledge of art, and however varied in its manifestations this art had general lines that it would be impossible to overlook. Whether it aspired to exalt Truth in Beauty, or whether it simply sought the reality, it had for basis a strict and steadfast observation of nature, conscientious and honest research, a sincerity unchanged by literary amplifications, a common devotion to work, and, what may seem strange to our contemporaries, the apprenticeship, knowledge and exercise of technical skill.

FRÉDÉRIC MASSON.

L. L. Boilly.

Arrival of the Diligence.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

J. L. David.

Paris and Helen.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

J. L. David.

Portrait of Madam Chalgrin.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

J. L. David.

Portrait of Madam J. Morel de Tanguy and her Two Daughters.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

J. L. David.

Portrait of Madam Récamier.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

J. L. David.

The Sabines.

Negative by Braun, Clément & C^ie^

J. L. A. Th. Géricault.

The Medusa's Raft.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

A. J. Gros (Baron).

The Battle of Eylau (9th February, 1807).

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

J. A. D. Ingres.

Portrait of M. Bertin.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

J. A. D. Ingres.

Portrait of Madam Rivière.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

J. A. D. Ingres.

Portrait of Mlle. Rivière.

J. A. D. Ingres.

Portrait of Mlle. Rivière.

P. P. Prudhon.

Portrait of Marie Marguerite Lagnier.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

THE

GREAT MASTERS

IN THE

LOUVRE GALLERY

THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

FIRST VOLUME

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F. Boucher.

The Nest.

THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

AMONG all the artists who were twenty years old during the joyous years of the Regency and who were innocent enough to believe that art has no other duty than to serve the whims of a Court and aristocracy extravagantly fond of pleasure, no one more than François Boucher was, by turns, the spoiled child and victim of changing fashion. The "Painter of all the Graces" had scarcely ceased to exist when he was anathematised by the believers in virtue, those who were to attempt during the reign of Louis XVI. a sort of moral reaction; and soon afterwards the revolutionists and classicists vied with each other in reproaching him with being responsible for the "corruption of youth" and the "depravation of taste." According to these moralists he had "sharpened his pencil and ground his colours simply to charm the eyes by vice;" his "low and trivial brush had lost all idea of truth, modesty and delicacy;" his "paintings were doomed to the back-shops of second-hand dealers," and his memory vowed by turns to "ridicule" and "infamy."

Our time is more desirous of understanding than judging, and the benevolent criticism, which is more hospitable than it was a hundred years ago and appreciates all the forms and shades of taste, is more indulgent towards Boucher. We have rendered him justice, and recognised in his work, where the exquisite parts often touch the inferior ones, the hand and enthusiasm of a true artist. He has reconquered his place in the galleries of amateurs as well as in the public museums, and a chapter of the history of French art belongs to him alone.

Although the Louvre has twenty-one of Boucher's works, without counting the drawings, they do not give a complete idea of his art. A public museum is, unfortunately, only a cemetery: the pictures that are reverently placed therein often reach their destination only after having been "disaffected." Boucher was, before all, a decorator; even his easel pictures, his most unimportant drawings and simple sketches are treated with a decorative sentiment and suppose the framing and accompaniment of architecture and furniture that explain and complete them. It is in such surroundings that it is necessary to reconstruct them in our thoughts; they express all their signification when seen upon wainscotings with delicately-carved garlands, or in panels painted in white "mixed with softened gridelin." For the painters of Boucher's time it was not a question, as under the reign of the Grand King, of decorating stately galleries built with green and red marble colonnades, with warm colours and ample and sumptuous ornamentation. The new generation no longer demanded that art should express the ideas of grandeur and majesty which the Versailles Court had received and accepted from the preceding reign. The pomp of those days had given way to pleasure, and the imposing gallery of state become parcelled into boudoirs. The delicate wainscot carvings, the white grounds of panels cut in profile, the "clusters" thrown in capricious curves required lighter tones than those used by the Lebruns and Mignards; the decorator's pallet became modified at the same time as the sentiment and rhythm of forms. The programme consisted, henceforth, in ornamenting a drawing-room for conversation, and a boudoir for the pleasure of a society tired by a long constraint, whose principal occupation was to amuse itself—and gallantry was the supreme amusement. After Maintenon, Pompadour; after Lebrun, Lemoyne and his "worthy pupil" Boucher, according to the catalogue of the Salon of 1737, where were exhibited "four panel pictures representing *Rustic Scenes,* and two ovals, the *Four Seasons,* made for the King."

At the same epoch Boucher executed the frieze panels for the Soubise mansion, and between that date and 1763 he painted the several pastoral subjects that are at the Louvre. The theme of these compositions is generally the same; these shepherds and shepherdesses in rumpled satin exchanging gallant tattle in landscapes where the trees themselves seem embellished and bedecked for the universal masquerade, no longer interest us. They were made for a time when Abbé de Bernis sang

La chaîne éternelle et légère
Qui si librement retenait
Le berger près de la bergère,

and asked Heaven, with the authority belonging to a future Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church,

Pour l'heure présente,
Toujours un plaisir;
Pour l'heure suivante,
Toujours un désir.

It is also from this period that landscape, if not nature, occupies a more important place in Boucher's work. We still feel, here and there in the order and arrangement of the backgrounds, some of the traditions of historical landscape as it was painted in the seventeenth century; but there is scarcely as much distance from Boucher to Poussin as from Abbé de Bernis to Corneille. Without doubt, Boucher is more of a "painter" than Bernis was a poet, but their ideal is the same. We read in the notice which was consecrated to Boucher in the *Nécrologe,* on the morrow of his death, that "the taste for landscape" was awakened in Boucher at the moment when he was employed at the Beauvais tapestry manufactory; either he had discovered nature from

F. Boucher.

Shepherd and Shepherdesses.

the window of his post-chaise one fine morning on the borders of the Oise, or, what is more likely, obliged to hunt up decorative subjects for the backgrounds of his tapestries, he saw in landscape a rich and easy mine to work. We even know, from the testimony of one of his pupils, that he recommended them to "cultivate their talent in landscape-painting, because landscape-painters are wanting in France, especially for the King's orders, either in tapestry, decoration or other works." Here is undoubtedly the origin of these "landscapes designed from nature," engraved for him by Basan and Chedel, and of the quantity of "studies" which, in the amusing little picture in the La Caze collection, swell out a portfolio of the *Painter's Studio*. However this may be, Boucher never sought in nature anything but the elements for a decoration; in looking

at nature he always had the theatre in mind, and at the Salon of 1742 he exhibited a "wide landscape representing the *Hamlet of Issé*, destined to be enlarged for the Opera." There was his real domain.

What would become of the shepherds and shepherdesses of his *Pastorals* if placed in a real country? They would be as embarrassed as the Celadons and Alexises of the *Astræa*. To the rustic who might have reproached them for their want of authentic rusticity, Boucher could have replied, like Honoré d'Urfé in the preceding century: "If you are blamed for not speaking the language of villagers, and if neither you nor your herd have an odour of sheep and goats, reply, my shepherdess, that you are not, neither are they that follow you, among those needy shepherdesses who, to earn their living, are obliged to lead flocks to pasture." We are, therefore, duly warned; they are proud ladies and fine lords who are represented in *Astræa*, and actresses rusticating in a ballet decoration whom Boucher has placed in his *Pastorals*. Fontenelle was not able to know them when he composed his *Eclogues*, but he predicted them to a certain extent when he wrote: "It is

with eclogues, it seems to me, as with the clothes that theatrical performers wear in ballets when they represent peasants; they are trimmed with more ribbons and laces, and simply cut in the shape of peasants' garments." But in Boucher's pictures these clothes are adjusted in the latest fashion, and in the art of arranging stuffs, cutting out the shepherdesses' corsages in the most advantageous spot, placing pink bows on the shepherds' slippers, silk ferrets on their crooks or tufts on the sheeps' necks, no one was more skilful than the "Anacreon of Painting," as the *Mercury of France* loved to call Boucher.

In the corner of an abandoned park, at the foot of a clump of trees surrounding a rock-work fountain where plump Cupids tease a goat, are two shepherdesses and a shepherd. *She* was wreathing a garland of flowers, and is suddenly interrupted in this innocent labour. A shepherd has just arrived; he has thrown his hat, basket and crook upon the grass and seated himself at her feet; he approaches her tenderly, she scarcely defends herself and seeks a refuge or support beside her companion, who is seated just above and ready for complete indulgence if not for entire complicity. However, the little marble Cupids seem to encourage him, the fine-fleeced sheep bleat, and in the luminous transparency of the atmosphere the trees expand their bluish foliation; finally, a bridge, noble survivor of the Poussinesque "manufacture," rounds its stone arches in the distance. All this is smartly touched up in a pretty arrangement of artificial and elegant decoration, in a confusion of bright tones where the blues and golden yellows, the ash-pinks and the soft greens, delicately sustain the blond carnations of the generously low-necked shepherdesses.

In *The Nest* there are about the same figures and the same witnesses of a like scene always with an identical decoration. Here, the "irregularity" and agitation of the lines are still more accentuated. The shepherd has just taken from a neighbouring tree a nest in which some young sparrows whine; he torments them with his finger, while the shepherdess with her eyes cast down and with the docility of a pupil who asks nothing better than to learn, looks and listens; another shepherdess, leaning on her elbows, does the same; a third is negligently shearing a sheep. At the side, near an overflowing urn, two marble Cupids frisk about, and the stream flows lazily along between its blue-green shores towards undulating hills rising on the horizon in a golden haze. Upon the salmon-pink, blue and reddish gowns of the shepherdesses is spread a fine and vermilion light that makes the blues of the costumes softly vibrate and gives a clear and tranquil harmony to this superficial and promiscuous scene.

It is here that the "painter" in Boucher asserts his rights and defends himself. He had a very vulgar vision of feminine beauty; whether he painted shepherdesses or goddesses, it was always the same chubby figure, the same type of ballet girl more or less dressed or undressed whom he found at the end of his brush, and which reminds us of Marmontel's saying: "He had not seen the graces in a good place." Boucher's imagination was inferior, smilingly and complacently sensual; from the little Coupé of the Opera to the little Murfi he has nearly always reproduced the same type of woman, and as he knew this type by heart, he had only to draw upon his souvenirs to despatch briskly his designs and paintings. Still, a delicate colourist, and occasionally an exquisite one, was awakened in him in his best days; then he sorted the clear tones upon his canvas with a rare quickness of eye, and knew how to bring out of them that discreet splendour which insinuates itself, attracting and retaining on its passage, like a caressing invitation, a promise of refined voluptuousness. *Diana Quitting her Bath with one of her Companions* is one of his best successes. This composition figured at the Salon of 1742, that is to say it dates from the painter's finest years; it did not enter the Louvre until 1852, when it was purchased for 3,200 francs from M. Van Cuyck, who had bought it for 3,595 francs from M. de Narbonne. The engraving that we publish herewith

J. B. S. Chardin.
The Housewife.

renders a description of the picture unnecessary. It will be readily seen, however, that Diana is here no longer the shy goddess, the proud huntress, nobly and simply beautiful, queen of the forests and mountains, and devoted to the prairies where the shepherds never led their flocks to pasture and where the spring flowers symbolised the purity of virginal souls. She is here much more accommodating and would phlegmatically yield to all conditions; but she can at least claim the title of Phœbe (the brilliant one). As in ancient mythology she was in relations with the celestial light, it would seem that the artist has endeavoured to paint her young form in the same luminous medium. A radiance that engraving cannot express springs from this canvas. A blond note by the side of a blue note composes the dominant of the brilliant unison in which are mingled green, bluish and orange-pink tones corresponding with and softly extolling one another before melting into a rosy harmony that fills the eye like a caress and envelops the nudity of the little deity with a halo of glory. Her body is constellated in all its folds with those tiny rosy touches that Boucher learned from his master Lemoyne, and of which he made an immoderate use. The landscape is in blue. Evidently, all this is conventional; the only details that preserve a natural air are the two dogs drinking in a brook near by, and it is possible that this naturalness was borrowed from his friend Oudry. In short everything, or nearly so, is false in this art except the charm that emanates from it. Let us, therefore, be indulgent to the dream of a simple Epicurean! It is not Rubens, nor Correggio; it is Boucher. And here we may repeat David's exclamation: "Every one cannot be a Boucher."

Without being equal to this *Diana*, the picture entitled *Venus's Toilette* also belongs to the best epoch (1749). The body of the goddess gracefully seated upon a bed of clouds in a sky where

the greens delicately play in a silvery light, has that easy grace, voluptuous unrestraint and charming spontaneity which the painters of the eighteenth century, and Boucher more than any other, knew how to put, even into their conventional art. She is fastening a set of pearls in her hair; a Cupid hands her the jewels and a nymph presents a mirror. The pearly tones of the gems, the golden colour of the jewels, the subdued pinks of the draperies upon the pale green sky, and the velvety reflection of the clouds, constitute a delicate and savoury accompaniment to her nudity. Ten years later Boucher showed the same qualities in his delightful sketch of the *Three Graces,* which is in the La Caze collection. The greens and the soft and faded pinks play so daintily upon the forms of the three women that they seem as though borrowed from a rough sketch by Rubens.

On the contrary, the painter's hand became heavy in the *Pastoral,* where a shepherd is giving a little bird to a shepherdess to kiss, while she weaves a crown of leaves and forget-me-nots. Divest this shepherdess and you will have Diana; it is always the same bulged and slightly retreating forehead, the turned-up nose, the dimpled mouth, the large, falsely-innocent eyes, the type, in short, whose only real characteristic is its absence of moral expression. But we are here in 1763, that is to say in the last years of the artist's production. *Lugete, Veneres Cupidinesque,* the "Painter of all the Graces" has grown old! He seems to have endeavoured to give more consistency to his colour, and has succeeded only in making it thicker. This change is because the critics became severer. In his Salon of 1763, Diderot said: "Boucher is no longer anything but a man corrupted by praise and infatuated with his talent.... the ruin of all the young pupils.... it is his fault if they are tormented with the mania of combining garlands of children and painting chubby and rosy bottoms!"

If Boucher did not know of this attack, others reached his ears. People began to talk about the "grand, severe and antique taste," of the excavations of Pompeii and Herculaneum. It was in vain that he placed in the background of his *Tame Sparrow* "a temple with columns and a pyramid which perfectly represented those respectable monuments of antiquity, such as may still be seen in Italy." *(Mercury of France,* April, 1762.) It was in the name of these "respectable monuments" that he was still to be criticised, if not condemned. The public taste changed. Cochin, in a report made on October 16, 1764, declared that the Cupids, Seasons and Elements so much employed by decorative artists, and especially by Boucher, "are hackneyed subjects which furnish only very ordinary things to the most fruitful geniuses;" and the Anacreon of Painting, in order to meet the new taste and rise to "high art," made known his intention, or his desire, of "treating an historical scene." We begin to feel the approaching end, the end of a man and also of a mode and a society, of that society whose art had been its faithful mirror under the reign of Pompadour, its constant and all-powerful protectress with the King and Marigny.

It was not, however, reserved for Boucher to witness the final catastrophe, nor to see the red morrows of all these pink carnivals. When he died, in 1770, the revelry still continued, and no one appeared to foresee that it would be so quickly and tragically interrupted. French society of the eighteenth century—I mean the privileged and directing society grouped around Versailles—is entirely incarnated, as it were, in one of its most charming members, Madame de Civrac, one of President Henault's close friends. She had been sent, when ill, to the healing waters, but only to come back in a dying state. The President organised a series of festivities at all the relays of the return journey. At Bernis a group of nobles dressed as ancient French chevaliers, accompanied by the best musicians of the King's chapel, sang couplets composed for her by the President; at Nemours the same group waited for her in village costumes, and the invalid thus travelled towards the sombre issue in pastoral and fairy

J. B. S. Chardin.

Saying Grace.

scenes renewed at each halt. It was in this manner that the expiring aristocracy amused itself with the divertisements and elegant vanities of its favourite artists.

A picture by Michel Barthelemy Ollivier, the Prince of Conti's painter, shows us with the precision of an official document the charm of one of these fashionable gatherings, which permitted those who frequented them to know "all the joy of living." The scene is placed in the small court of the Temple, in the gallery of the Four Mirrors, in 1766, the day when a young prodigy was received there, a child of ten years who showed a marvellous disposition for music and who was called Mozart. The painting was not exhibited until after the Prince's death, in 1777, when it figured in the Salon catalogue under the title : *An English Tea in the Gallery of the Four Mirrors at the Temple, with all the Prince of Conti's Court.* The following description was added: "To the right, a table at which are seated the bailiff De Chabrillant and the mathematician De Mairan; the Princess of Beauvau, standing, pours out tea to the latter. In front, the Count of Jarnac holds a dish, and the Count of Chabot is eating a cake; farther on the Countess of Boufflers is seated before a folding screen. The young Countess of Egmont

holds a napkin and plate, while her mother cuts a cake. Near by is M. Pont de Veyle leaning upon the back of an armchair. The Prince of Hennin rests his hand upon the back of a chair upon which is seated the wife of the Marshal of Luxemburg, holding a saucer; between them is Madame de Vierville. Mademoiselle Bagarotte is seated alone in front of a small round table, near which is a tea-kettle placed upon a portable stove. The Prince of Conti, back to the spectator, is standing near Trudaine. Finally, to the left, Mozart plays the harpsichord, and Geliotte, standing, sings in accompanying himself on the guitar. The Chevalier de La Laurency, gentleman-in-waiting to the Prince, is standing behind Mozart, and

the Prince of Beauvau, seated, reads a pamphlet. The drawing-room is decorated with large mirrors and frieze panels representing women's portraits. A violincello and music books are placed in the left corner, and on a paper are the following lines :

De la douce et vive gaieté
Chacun icy donne l'exemple.
On dresse des autels au thé;
Il méritait d'avoir un temple."

The painting is affected, fine as a miniature and documentary as an authentic certificate. It came to the Louvre from Versailles, which still keeps the *Supper Given by the Prince of Conti to Eight Guests in One of the Drawing-rooms of the Temple*, and two other paintings by Ollivier, one representing an *Out-Door Festival*, and the second a *Hunt* in the Prince's property at l'Isle Adam.

The directors of the fine arts service have had brought back from Fontainebleau two paintings that merited a place at the Louvre as complementary documents for the history of decorative art in the eighteenth century, and also to help us resolve a little problem that is still unsolved. Who was this Jean Baptiste Hilaire that painted these two frieze panels, *Music* and *Reading?* He might be called a pupil of Lancret who had lingered on until the end of the eighteenth century, but nothing precise is yet known about him. *Reading*, which we reproduce herewith, is a fine piece, a little superficial, but graceful in its arrangement and delicately harmonious in colour. The end of a park where jets of water spout in foaming ripples, the white gown of the young woman, with her pink belt and broad hat with white feathers, the delicate half tint upon the lower part of the face and neck of the one seated and wearing a strawberry-pink dress, the softness of the grisdelin sky with salmon-red spots melted in the limpidity of the moist air, the quality and harmony of the tones and the skilful ease of the handling, give the impression, in spite of the neglected drawing, that the man who painted this panel had a sure eye and quick hand.

It is by the intelligent handling of the brush that the masters, great and small, of the eighteenth century knew how to give value to the slightest things; it is thus that Fragonard has put into his most summary and unimportant sketches the brilliancy of his mind and the spark of love that animates and transfigures matter. Fragonard was a great painter, and although the Louvre possesses none of his masterpieces, the works that our national museum has been able to gather, permit us at least to understand what a clear narrator and "sketcher of genius" was our good Frago.

It is Boucher's influence that we find in the *Bather,* hung in the La Caze gallery, and which having figured at the Varanchau sale as early as 1777, may be classed among the works of Fragonard's early manner. Everything is bright and sparkling in this lively sketch where the plump, rosy bodies of nude women sport in fresh verdure. The white carnations are touched up with those reddish strokes that Boucher lavished, and the brush turns with a voluptuous raciness upon the abundant rotundities; surely, there remains nothing of the "difficulty in painting flesh-tints" signalled by Natoire when Fragonard began his studies at Rome.

The master had more than once painted *The Happy Moment* in his pastorals, and the rhymesters were always ready to compose insipid compliments on the *heure du berger :*

D'une belle, Amour seul doit être l'horloger,
Et l'on n'a pas besoin d'avoir réglé sa montre
Pour savoir l'heure du berger.

The hour is about to strike in a clock borne in the clouds by three Cupids, while a shepherd

J. H. Fragonard.
Bathers.

in a yellow jacket and pink trousers shows it with his finger to a shepherdess in a low-neck pink gown.

In collecting these little pictures by an artist already disdained, which dealers sold for almost nothing (the *Chemise enlevée* was bought from a dealer at the Place de la Bourse for twenty francs) La Caze prepared a future revenge for one of his favourite painters. If the *Drinker* in yellow cap and brown trousers, although worthy of being attributed to Fragonard, cannot be cited as a characteristic specimen of his manner, the *Sleeping Bacchante* is one of his light and subtile sketches where everything is said in a more persuasive fashion by its unrestrained style than in the most elaborate works of the most infuriated "finishers." On the sky, to the right, a remainder of warm light is dying

out; but the body of the reclining woman, who sleeps so soundly in graceful abandonment, radiates and suffices to illuminate the firmament.

The bit of landscape, which is scarcely indicated in this canvas, could not give a presentiment that there was in Fragonard the great landscape artist that some of his pictures and many of his drawings have revealed. Behind the tall trees of parks, which shelter in their moving shadows now fantastical puppets, now swings loaded with women in pink satin who pass and repass in a sliding movement of blond rays like an alluring and perceptible image of caprice and desire; in the depths of the skies blooming with light or veiled by twilight, where the noble umbrella-pines are rounded out by Italian villas;—this indefatigable *fa-presto,* this southerner of Grasse, caught a glimpse at certain hours of the grand mystery contemplated by the melancholy soul of Watteau. It is said that Fragonard was discouraged by high art on account of the difficulty experienced in receiving payment for such work;

his *Grand Priest Coresus Sacrificing Himself to save Callirhoea*, at the Louvre, is the only attempt of this kind. For those who have examined at the National Archives the registers and portfolios of the King's household the delay in paying the 2,400 francs due to Fragonard is not surprising; he waited only eight years, and still was one of the lucky ones. But this reason was not so decisive as has been believed. In reality, Fragonard was not a man for executing official orders, even in the days when they were given by Marigny and Pompadour. The amateurs of dainty works, easy to comprehend and facile to lodge, suited him better; his tastes still more than his interests inclined him in this direction. With an incredible fecundity he furnished an entire museum of small paintings and drawings, erotic, intimate, familiar or gallant, and always done with life and spirit, as by a turn of the hand and with a caress and a smile. It is easy to represent him to ourselves in the attitude of the personage he has painted in the brilliant sketch at the Louvre entitled *Inspiration*, where we seem to see the form rise under his rapid brush.

The *Music Lesson* also is a simple sketch, which was given to the Louvre in 1849 by Walferdin, the most enthusiastic and fortunate of Frago collectors. In examining this sketch we are able to explain the artist's promptness in catching and retaining the expressive gesture, and his precision in evoking it in its spontaneous appearances; here we find the shade so delicately indicated of the somewhat hesitating application of the young girl seated at the harpsichord, and of the obliging attention of the young man who holds the music in one hand while with the other he beats time on the back of the armchair. And at the same moment as the artist's nimble fingers seem to model life in real flesh or to awaken it under the caresses of his brush, he distributes the tones in perfect harmonies.

Although we cannot call the *Music Lesson* one of his best sketches, it is easy to see that the painter who executed this work was a born colourist. We need only call attention to the manner in which the white tones of the gown are treated and grow green in the shade near the reds and salmon-pinks of the furniture, and the way the boy's face holds itself in the half tone, as well as his greenish clothes mottled upon a ground of violet-red.

And the pretty girl in a dead-leaf brown corsage and bright yellow gown, who holds an open book before her, which she does not read, and who muses in smiling, with her arms resting upon a pile of folios whence her eyes have never wandered—a sufficiently approximative symbol of a *Study*, that might, with as much probability, be called *Distraction*, or the study of smiles and winks—is also finely and largely rendered; it is a bit of painting that philosophers would hardly appreciate, but one that suffices for a well-trained eye. The freshness of the execution, the quality of the light that plays upon the young lady's throat and brow, the delicacy of the shadows which rest for a moment upon the frill and the nape of the neck, and which we feel to be of subtle and mutable essence, remain even in their incomplete state more interesting and amusing than many finished works of more serious artists.

These two sketches, the *Music Lesson* and a *Study*, belong to the same epoch or nearly so; they may be dated, the same as this other sketch, *Music*, *portrait of M. de la Bretiche, painted in an hour by M. Fragonard*, if not exactly in 1769, at least in the decade prior to 1780, that is to say during the painter's maturity. He was only fifty-seven years old in 1789, and the Revolution, which dispersed his buyers, was a severe blow for him, but did not threaten his life. David's friendship protected him, and it was, perhaps, at his friend's suggestion that he dedicated to Franklin's memory one of his finest etchings, in which he symbolised the celebrated line : *Eripuit cœlo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis !*

Fragonard was named a member of the jury for the competition of the year III., and the official reports of the sittings of this jury show that he was in favour of a painting "com-

J. H. Fragonard.

A Study.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

mendable by expressions closely connected with the scene and happily perceived, forms that denote good schooling, and principles of colour derived from true tones." Next, he was placed in the Conservatory of the Museum, and this note by a friendly hand figures in the records of his administration : "Fragonard has painted numerous works ; warmth and originality are the characteristics of his talent ; connoisseur and great artist, he will consecrate his old days to the care of masterpieces, the number of which he contributed to increase in his youth." This was very flattering, but all the same the good Frago's day was over. His portrait shows him to us at this date old with short, gray hair ; no more powdered wig, no more lace frill ; a collar with a double twisted cravat and a plain black suit ; Frago is in mourning for his youth. He was to linger on until 1806, but had nothing more to do, and upon that brow where so many rosy dreams had dwelt the gray twilight descended.

Like Fragonard, Greuze outlived his success. The fashion that had served him was no longer indulgent, and the last years of his life (he died on March 21, 1805) were spent in misery and neglect, consoled only by the tender care of a daughter and the faithful friendship of a small circle of friends. It would seem, however, that the "Painter of Morals" and the sensible and sentimental executor of scenes of middle-class and popular manners and customs ought to have found favour with the new society regenerated by the Revolution. But the public taste was elsewhere, and the enthusiastic cries that greeted Greuze at his first appearance no longer awakened any echo. To understand this early enthusiasm we must place ourselves by critical sympathy in the surroundings where it showed itself. No painting by this master is better calculated to facilitate this retrospective evocation than *The Village Bride,* which was exhibited at the Salon of 1761 ; it was hung during the last days of the exhibition, as the artist was unable to finish it earlier. As soon as it was seen it was acclaimed by the public, who crowded before it. Diderot, who returned to the Salon expressly to view the picture, had great difficulty in elbowing his way through the increasing throng of visitors. "At last I have seen it," he wrote, "this painting by our friend Greuze ; but it was not without an effort. It continues to draw a crowd. The subject is pathetic, and in looking at it we feel won over by a gentle emotion." The picture came just at the right moment ; the wind was turning towards virtue. A large part of the public was tired of gallant mythological scenes ; tender and sensitive hearts asked for a more simple and natural art, and above all a moving and "touching" art.

It was only three years since Diderot had published his *Dissertation Upon Dramatic Metrical Composition* and formulated the expected esthetical doctrine. The two essential articles of the new law were the imitation of nature as a means, and the moral instruction of the spectators as an end. As he asked of the theatre to represent "man's condition" and his "family relations," it was well that artists should seek the subjects for their pictures in domestic life; and Greuze brought him precisely what he desired. At the same Salon, Chardin, who had opened the way, exhibited a repetition, with variations, of his *Saying Grace,* and Lépicié was about to give his "households." Consequently there was great enthusiasm. "My friend, give us moral subjects," was what Diderot was soon to say to the artist. In the meanwhile he celebrated with effusion the merits of the *Village Bride*.

Nothing is more amusing than to read over in front of the picture itself the critical pages written by Diderot. The "pathos of the subject" touches him, and if, according to esthetical habit he considers it his duty to incidentally praise "the composition," the figures of which hold together and move about "wavering and towering," he at once admits that he "doesn't care." What really impresses, delights and excites him is the subject, the gently pathetic comedy, where smiles and tears mingle, where each person fills so well his part, and where all the intentions and intimate thoughts are so well expressed by the attitudes, gestures and regards. Look at the venerable father, an old man of sixty—and he is always the same in Greuze's pictures, from the *Reading the Bible* to the *Prodigal Son*—what a kindly air! His arms outstretched to his future son-in-law, "he speaks to him with a heartfelt effusion that enchants us." In fact, is he not one of Diderot's own personages? It is not difficult to divine in seeing him that what he is saying is moral and impressive. And how attentively the bridegroom listens! "His face is bronzed, but it is easy to perceive that he is pale with fright." He is admirably dressed, "without quitting his rank." The bride is also well dressed. The white apron could not be better, although "there is a little luxury in its trimmings; but it's the day of the betrothal!" And how pretty she is! "A beautifully-shaped neck that is not seen at all, but I wager there is nothing to support it and that it holds itself up alone!"

With Diderot, and also with Greuze, there is always a bit of sensuality mingled with the most chaste effusions. And what a graceful gesture of the arm slightly passed under that of her future husband, the tips of the fingers gently resting upon his hand! And this good old peasant mother; she also is "grandly and admirably dressed." She is near sixty, "but very healthy;" and Diderot, who already belongs to the family and shares the emotion of all these estimable people, rejoices to his heart's content. Therefore he passes minutely in review the twelve actors in the scene, from the little boy who stands close against the notary's table, at the right, to the two serving maids in the background, at the left, who negligently leaning against each other seem to say, "when will our turn come?" He lingers with emotion, even upon the hen with her chickens in the middle of the scene, this good mother-hen "who also has five or six children!" A little girl throws grain to the chickens. Ah! what worthy people! "Here is really an ingenious poetic touch!"

Doubtless, some persons have asked if the elder sister, who is leaning upon the back of the paternal armchair, is a sister or a servant. If she is a servant she "ought not to lean upon the back of her master's chair,"—rather refined etiquette for peasants!—if she is one of the family why has she such an envious look, "this low-born air and untidy appearance?" Most of those who observe her are mistaken; it is one of the details of the picture discussed by the crowd. "But," continues Diderot, "it is better to neglect these trifles and 'go into raptures' over a

M. B. Ollivier.

An English Tea at the Prince of Conti's.

work that shows beauties on all sides; it is certainly the best thing that Greuze has done." Understood in this fashion art criticism becomes confounded with dramatic criticism; a picture is "recounted," the same as a piece or a novel.

Today we are not so easily affected, and what we like above all in this picture—which is really theatrical and declamatory—is Diderot's enthusiasm, and also what it tells us about so curious a moment in the evolution of French taste and art. Still, to consider it as a piece of painting, if it does not show the harmony and cohesion that Diderot admired, it contains at least some exquisite bits; first and foremost, the little pearly-complexioned bride, in the fine whiteness of the lawn that so gracefully surrounds her face and neck, with the flower, delicately placed in

the hollow of her open corsage, that Greuze has executed with such a free, precise and light hand.

As a painter, Greuze was singularly unequal; but in his best days he was almost a great master. This title will not seem exaggerated to those who have seen, for example, the portrait of his friend Wille, the engraver. But he has not always shown the free touch, the direct and vibrating vigour, that renders this portrait one of the finest works of the eighteenth century. In his studies of children's and young girls' heads painted from life, he has also found truthful and natural expressions much more persuasive than all the literary and sentimental mannerisms he has put into his pictures. It is in these "bits" that he must be judged; whilst in his larger compositions his colour is often diluted, running, and poorly sustained, and in his studies and some of his portraits it is by turns tender, strong, caressing and deliciously fine. The spark of sensuality in his nature—for there was in this sentimental citizen a mixture of Chardin and Boucher—often lighted

the flame of desire; but it too often, also, caused him to put into his works displeasing intentions or mental reservations. These "expressive heads," where he endeavoured to paint sentiments—for example, terror or sorrow as in the *Study* at the Louvre, which we here reproduce—savour too much of a school exercise, although the execution is good and the blue ribbon is placed with charming precision in the broadly-handled hair. The other *Study* comes nearer to the type made popular—too popular—by the *Broken Jug*, where the apparent artlessness of the subject serves simply to render a touch of licentiousness more "agreeable" to amateurs. Madame Roland, when she was yet Mademoiselle Philipon, thus described the painting of her friend Greuze to her companions, the Misses Cannet :

"It is an artless, fresh and charming little girl who has just broken her jug; she holds it on her arm near the fountain where the accident happened; her eyes are not too widely open, her mouth is still half yawning; she tries to comprehend her misfortune and does not know whether she is guilty. Nothing could be prettier or more piquant; the only reproach that might be made to M. Greuze is of not having represented his little one so angry that she would not have any desire to return to the fountain in the future. I told him so, and the joke amused us."

Leaving all jesting aside, there is an equally delicious dexterity and amplitude in the execution of the large, moist eyes of the young girl in the *Broken Jug* as well as in that of the *Study*, these eyes so astonished and inquisitive and where it seems that in the transparent depths of the pupil there is gold in fusion and imprisoned light. We readily recognise at what school he had taken lessons and advice.

Under date of July 22, 1760, his friend Wille tells us : "M. Greuze and I have been to the Rubens Gallery at the Luxemburg, which was opened expressly for us. We mounted a ladder so as to get a nearer view of the pictures painted by this great man, and considered the manner of executing and colouring his works worthy of remark." We did not need this assurance to know that Greuze was a determined Rubenist in the long quarrel between the partisans of Flemish painting and those of Italian painting, the north against the south, the same as in music champions fought for or against Gluck or Piccini. Wille was also for Rubens, and what he especially preferred in his friend's work were those studies of heads. He bought two "superb ones" at forty gold louis for Count Moltke; he also bought some for himself, and found them "admirably good in all the parts that concern painting." He is "enchanted" with them, and proclaims Greuze "a profound and solid painter."

This judgment would have been still better merited by Chardin. Profound is, perhaps, a little two high-sounding and literary an epithet for this conscientious artist, but perfect, charming and loyal are titles that would suit him very well. Here is an artist who was not spoiled by literature; he was a painter and nothing else. It is in his work that we must seek realistic and middle-class art, the interpretation of private and domestic life in the eighteenth century. Yes a "home" where nothing takes place, where ordinary furniture is ranged against bare walls, kitchens and dining-rooms where children play, where simple housewives move about or work, and where there is a wooden table with household utensils upon it—all this is enough to interest the eye of a painter and awaken the sympathy of an artist when he has, like Chardin, the sense and taste of fine and discreet harmonies that light throws upon things, when he loves to follow the wanderings of a ray over the surfaces that it animates, the rhythmical dialogues and subtle secrets of the half-tints and reflections, the distribution of tones that correspond with and complete one another, and when in his simple and well-balanced soul, cordial and artless, human and deliciously optimist, the reality without

F. H. Drouais.

Portraits of Charles X. at the Age of Six Years,
and the Queen of Sardinia at the Age of Four Years.

being deformed blossoms into poesy. For such artists there happen every day around us and within reach of our hands, marvellous things, finer than the combats of Alexander the Great, more touching than the loves of Olympia; and these spectacles that life offers us and that nature and the regular working of its laws renew unceasingly, we have only to enjoy them unrestrained and seek in them the material and inspiration of our art. It is this lesson that Chardin gave to his contemporaries in 1740 by his *Saying Grace,* repeated several times afterwards with some variations. He was then forty-one years old, having been born on November 2, 1699, in a back shop in the rue de Seine occupied by his father, Jean Chardin, a master carpenter. Since September 25, 1728, he had been received and accepted an academician "as painterofflowers, fruits and character subjects" by reason of two pictures: *Fruits and Animals*, and a *Kitchen Interior*, or the *Ray*, which the Louvre keeps preciously today. In 1737 he exhibited the *Fountain,* a *Washerwoman,* a *Little Boy making a Card Castle*, some sketches of children without paint, powder or finery; in short, nature's children; a *Little Girl Playing with her Breakfast,* a *Little Girl Playing Shuttlecock*, and a *Young Pupil designing*. To the following Salon he sent a *Lady Drinking Tea*, a *Young Man Making Soap Bubbles*, and the *Housewife;* this latter painting was bought by Chevalier de la Roque for

140 francs, and the Louvre, in 1865, paid 4,050 francs for it at the Laperlier sale. Guérard and Lépicié, who engraved this charming picture in 1747—or rather the publishers of their engraving—added, according to the mode of that time, this indifferent verse :

A votre air, j'estime et je pense,
Ma chère enfant, sans calculer,
Que vous prenez sur la dépense
Ce qu'il faut pour vous habiller.

This commentary added some perfectly useless mental reservations to the painter's thought. He had simply wished to paint a housewife of the lower-middle class returning from market, and thought only about what he painted. The heavy loaf of well-baked and browned bread weighs on the housewife's arm ; she is in a hurry to deposit her burden upon the polished-wood side-board, near a glazed stoneware jug, the handle of which rounds under the caress of a ray of light not far from a pewter dish. The kitchen where the housewife has just entered opens on to a courtyard that receives light from a corner of pale blue sky, and the harmonising of this sky with the housewife's blue-gray apron, the delicate modulations of the light, the skilful accord of these distributed tones which quietly sing and make music that is sensible to the eye and beneficial to the mind, constitute the whole of the "subject" of this picture. Let others paint Iris, messenger of Diana; this worthy housewife and the light of a fine Parisian winter day were sufficient for Chardin to make us a masterpiece.

This simplicity and sincerity in the presence of nature at first perplexed the esthetical critics, even those who, like Diderot, were to express later on the most affectionate admiration for Chardin. When he saw at the Salon of 1761 the repetition of *Saying Grace,* he found no other observation than this : "It is always a very faithful imitation of nature, with the artist's characteristic handling, a rugged and harsh workmanship, a low, common and domestic nature." It is true that in 1763 Diderot corrected himself : "You arrive in the nick of time, Chardin, to refresh my eyes! Here you are again, grand magician, with your silent compositions! How eloquently they speak to the artist! How they say everything to him about the initiation of nature, the science of colour and harmony! How the air circulates around these objects!" And he added : "This man is the greatest colourist of the Salons, and perhaps one of the first colourists of painting!" It was really time to perceive this fact.

Of all the interior scenes that Chardin painted, *Saying Grace* is, perhaps, the most typical. The contemplative calm of this scene, the gesture of the child who, with its eyes fixed upon those of its mother, recites the familiar prayer while waiting for the plate of soup that is upon the table, the attitude of the elder sister who seems ready to prompt the little one's hesitating memory, the mother's movement, caught in its simple, precise and expressive spontaneity—all this is observed and seized at the very source of life and put upon the canvas in an atmosphere of intimacy, light and peace wherein the recited words of the daily orison seem to mingle with the harmony of the surroundings and communicate a moral beauty. Chardin is, as it were, in the centre of a race of the old French masters, beginning with the Clouets, and before them of the Foucquets, and ending with Corot. "Conscientiousness and science," Corot loved to repeat, and these two words might also have been Chardin's motto.

Returning from School is not unworthy of him, although here it is merely question of a work attributed to his hand. The *Monkey Painter* is only a fancy in which, adapting to his taste for interior scenes the old fashion of using monkey subjects, he amused himself in reproducing in his own manner the caricatural figure of a four-footed artist.

A. Vestier.

Portrait of a Young Lady.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

To have a complete Chardin we should need to show the portrait-painter beside the painter of interiors and still-life, and with the painter the pastelist, equal in him to the strongest masters of the century and capable of resting in La Tour's neighbourhood without any danger. Chardin lived until 1779, that is to say until he was eighty years old. In the last years of his life he repeated himself a little, to Diderot's great sorrow; but how can we refuse to pardon repetitions in this kindly old gentleman, who was, besides, enfeebled by illness? And yet, it was during these last years, when the painter appeared to show fatigue, that the great pastelist was revealed in him. He remained thus until the end, equal to himself in his art as in his life, a simple-hearted, honest man and great artist. His whole biography may be summed up in these words.

Of all the witnesses of the history of art, the portrait painters are the most interesting and suggestive. They give us, in fact, a series of documents not to be found to the same degree in any other class of painted works, upon the manners, customs and painting of their time, upon the most fugitive shades of fashion as well as upon the most profound intuitions of sensibility. Certainly, the great portrait-painter is the one above all who, while captivated by each one of his models, remains capable of dominating them all, snatching their secret thoughts and fixing in a chosen moment the mark of their rank and the reflection of their moral life. "They think I see only their traits; but I go down to the very depths of their being without their knowing it, and paint their entire self," said La Tour. He did not, however, pride himself on his psychology; but his painter's eye in unravelling in the human form the essential characteristics and the irreducible stamp of intimate personality to be found in every man, revealed at the same time the interior by the exterior. "The soul and body make one united whole," said Bossuet. Thus, every great portrait painter gives us in his own manner his ideas upon the human soul, whilst the other painters show us only the history of fashions and the changes in head-dressing throughout the ages.

This is what François Hubert Drouais (1727-1775) did to a certain extent. Son of Hubert Drouais, the portrait-painter, and father of the historical painter Jean Germain Drouais, his first works were greeted with great hopes, and his early death caused unanimous regrets. Diderot did not like him, and neglected no opportunity of railing against "the faces of that man, which

are nothing but the most affected vermilion-red laid on the finest and whitest chalk." Nevertheless, he paid him a sufficiently fine compliment one day. "Drouais paints children very well," he wrote in 1763; "he puts into their eyes the same life, transparency, moisture, plumpness and limpidity that nature has given them; they seem to look at you and to smile at you, even close to; but in trying to give these children milky-white flesh he makes them of chalk." This may be translated: "Drouais is a more affected Nattier, if that be possible; in any case he is a more superficial one." We can judge of this very well by his double portrait of *Charles Philippe of France, Count of Artois,* at the age of six years, and *Marie Adelaide Clotilde Xavière of France,* at the age of four years, which we reproduce herewith. This portrait of the future Charles X. and the future Queen of Sardinia, which was engraved by Beauvalet under the title of the *Riding Lesson,* can pass as one of the artist's best works, and gives an exact idea of the measure in which his qualities rendered his faults acceptable. It shows especially what was imposed upon a painter desirous of pleasing at any price by the "spirit of the times," this invisible and always present assistant to even the greatest artists capable of dominating and surpassing it, but which reigns as a tyrant with the inferior and merely clever painter.

The royal family—and particularly Louis XV.'s daughters—gave him a great many orders, and it is probable that the Court was satisfied with this portrait of the royal children, as the King signed on May 5, 1763, a "Pass" to send to Parma M. Drouais charged by Madame Adelaide to paint the portrait of the hereditary prince and that of the princess, daughter of the Duke. Drouais esteemed his own talent very highly, so much so that the payment for the little Count of Artois's portrait was not made without difficulty. Here is a document on this subject, which we found in the portfolio of the archives of the King's household: "I have examined," writes Marigny on July 15, 1763, "the bill that you sent me for the paintings executed by order of Mesdames. Although I think highly of these works, I do not intend to pay the amount you ask. I beg you to reconsider yourself these somewhat exaggerated prices and not oblige me to fix the sum."

Alexander Roslin (1718-1793) was a Swede who arrived at Paris in the month of May, 1753. He came from Italy, preceded by the reputation of being a good portrait-painter, having shown his talent first at the Court of Bayreuth, where, at the Margrave's request, he organised an Academy; then at Florence, where he remained some time after having visited Venice, Bologna, Ferrara, Rome and Naples. On January 11, 1754, he was received at the Academy, "although Lutheran." "In consideration of his rare talent," says the official letter, "and of his recognised merit, His Majesty permits the Academy to receive him, without, however, creating a precedent." Shortly afterwards he was chosen to "make the portrait of the Dauphin on horseback, half life-size, for the price of 8,000 francs, considering the studies the horse has required, and the accessories." He soon received a mark of esteem from the government of the King's household, and while awaiting his departure on a journey made in 1774-1776, when he continued his series of successes at the Courts of the North and at St. Petersburg, he was given lodgings at the Louvre, pensions, leaves of absence when he desired them and, better than all, money. On February 3, 1781, he wrote to the Director General of Public Edifices, thanking him for the money advanced to relieve him of a pecuniary embarrassment. Louis XVI. continued to show him the same favour as Louis XV. and Marigny.

It was at the Salon of 1783 that appeared the *Young Lady Decking Cupid's Statue with a Garland of Flowers;* the painting was signed Chevalier Roslin. This picture is, in its sentiment and arrangement, "very Louis XVI.," and shows in a striking manner the painter's skill in treating stuffs. It is not, however, one of his best works. He has often expressed with more personality than in the somewhat flabby face of this young lady the individual character of his models. The work is, never-

J. B. Greuze.
A Head Study.

J. B. Greuze.
A Head Study.

theless curious, and a good example of how, in the last years of the century, during the reign of Louis XVI., the imagination had calmed down and a sort of bleating sentimentality become the supreme good taste. The public had read Rousseau's *Nouvelle Heloise* and wept over Saint Prix's love adventures.

Of all the portrait-painters, Madame Vigée-Le Brun is the one who best expresses what we may call the moderated Louis XVI. tint. It may be said that between Nattier and Gerard a whole period of the history of portrait-painting in France belongs to this amiable woman. She was adopted by the society of the last days of the monarchy and by Marie Antoinette, and was already celebrated under her maiden name of Elizabeth Louisa Vigée when, by an unfortunate marriage, she became Madame Le Brun. She lived until 1842, but her work was finished in 1789, and when at the first mutterings of the Revolution she quitted France, she left behind her authentic masterpieces. When she returned from exile her public no longer existed and she did not find a new set of amateurs; but the accord had been so complete between the painter and her models that a whole generation lives again in her paintings. If we wish to surprise in an attitude and a look the moral reflection of an epoch, divine the thoughts or dreams meditated under the complicated head-dresses of the high-born ladies who sheltered light and sensitive hearts beneath their transparent lawn neckerchiefs, we must question Madame Vigée-Le Brun.

The portrait of Madame Molé-Raymond was evidently painted in the last years of the artist's sojourn in France. It is conceived and executed according to the esthetical principles that Madame Vigée-Le Brun has taken care to explain in her *Souvenirs:* "I try," she says, "to give to the women whom I paint the attitude and expression of their physiognomy; those who have no physiognomy I paint in a dreamy mood, negligently sustained." The characteristic trait of Madame Molé, the amiable actress of the French Comedy, was doubtless her smile, and we readily see how her painter set herself to give this smile its full value. In the envelopment of the thick hair floating freely beneath the broad-brimmed hat, the feather of which flutters in the wind, the young woman passes rapidly, her hands concealed in her ample muff; she runs, or rather slides like a skater, and her scarf floating behind her leaves a sort of furrow in the air. The only thing wanting to make this charming portrait exquisite is a little broader handling.

At the moment when she painted this portrait, Madame Vigée-Le Brun had just attempted a little

revolution in women's attire. "I was horrified," she says, "by the garments that women then wore, and tried my best to render them more picturesque; I was delighted when I obtained the confidence of my models and was allowed to dress them according to my fancy. Shawls were not yet worn, but I used large scarfs lightly entwined around the body and upon the arms, and with them I tried to imitate the fine style of Raphael and Domenichino. Besides, I could not bear powder. I induced the beautiful Duchess of Grammont-Caderousse not to use any when she sat for her portrait. Her hair was ebony-black; I separated it in front and arranged it in irregular curls. After a sitting which finished at the dinner hour, the Duchess went to the theatre without changing her head-dress. Such a beautiful woman could not help starting the fashion; the style of arranging her hair took gradually, and finally the mode became general."

The Louvre possesses two portraits of the amiable artist painted by herself. In the first, which dates from 1787, she is seated upon a green sofa, dressed in a yellow satin gown and white gauze corsage with violet sleeves; her head is amply covered "by a kerchief of twisted muslin," which she invented and put into fashion. She holds upon her knees her little daughter dressed in white. Her hair is scarcely powdered. In the second portrait, which she painted in 1789 for the Count of Angivilliers, "Director and Intendant General of edifices, houses, castles, parks, gardens, arts and manufactures of the King," she completely suppressed the powder. With Madame de Grammont's complicity she had imposed her taste. This portrait of 1789 is the more popular one. Madame Vigée-Le Brun was thirty-four years old when she painted it, and as the accord was complete between the artist and her model, as the preferences of one and the intimate and avowable coquettishness of the other are equally satisfied, we may confidently accept this document. The influence of "the antique" is more perceptible here. Since she has read the *Travels of Young Anacharsis in Greece*, and heard of the "grand antique taste" and also of the efforts made by M. d'Angivilliers, for whom her portrait was destined, "to render to the arts all their dignity," Madame Vigée-Le Brun enjoys more what she calls "the simple and severe style" of Vien, and finds words of blame for poor Boucher. She wants to have French painting adopt a style contrary to the one that has caused its decline;" she says that the "responsible author of the decadence, the man of talent, the great culprit who has ruined it is Boucher, painter of boudoirs."

She therefore endeavours to obtain, so far as she is concerned, "this fine finish in the execution," which chilled her painting without giving it more consistency, but all the same she continues to believe in Rubens. She had seen at Antwerp the marvellous *Straw Hat,* had copied it, and would never forget this masterpiece where, she says shrewdly as an artist who has thoroughly appreciated the work, "what we must, for want of a better word, call the shades, is daylight." But at present she thinks of "the style." She has seen M. David's *Socrates*, the *Horatii* and *Brutus*. We must acquire a Roman soul!

Still, she is above all a woman. In her *Suggestions for Portrait Painting* she says to her niece: "Before beginning, talk with your model; try several attitudes and select not only the most agreeable one but the one that best suits the age and character of the sitter. With women use flattery; tell them they are beautiful and have fresh complexions; this gives them pleasure and makes them pose more easily." A rapid glance in her mirror took the place that day of this little bit of advice. She had been told that she was beautiful, and more than one "amateur of her figure," as she calls her bashful admirers, had come, under pretence of having their portrait painted, to admire her at home, in the secret hope of succeeding in pleasing her. But she was not romantic; the first novel she read was *Clarissa Harlowe;* this was after her marriage. Her painting and her daughter constituted her whole romance.

F. Callet.

The Triumph of Flora.

Here we find her, then, at thirty-four years of age; she was as badly married as a virtuous woman could be, and had not been spared profound sorrow; still, she had always loved life and society. She had preserved intact her good humour and courage, which beam in her eyes. Her beauty had not faded; it blossomed in her young maturity and she could generously display it. Her arms and shoulders boldly bared—the sacred "antiquity" and Style required it—are of unchanged purity, and were it not for the child she presses maternally upon her breast, who would dare to "give her her age?" She has spoken of this daughter with real tenderness. She could not yet foresee that this same child, married against her will, would be the cause of her sharpest sorrows, against which her wonted optimism would find her "dear passion," her "divine fury,"

painting, disarmed and powerless. If, in looking at her attentively we surprise in the depths of her eyes a gathering sadness, it is, perhaps, one of those presentiments that darken in full joy the brows of mothers, who suddenly become anxious without knowing why. It is, perhaps, also the regret at the thought of all she is obliged to abandon, for already the tempest is murmuring; yesterday, at the Longchamps promenade, she heard terrifying talk; "the crowd insulted in the most frightful manner those who passed by in carriages;" "criminals had thrown sulphur into her cellar." She had, besides, been signalled as a friend of "the Austrian" and of Calonne. She must quit the country; she will be the first refugee. Disguised, she is going to take the diligence, abandon what she loves the most, her studio, her friends, their drawing-rooms, Paris, where she has been acclaimed—and, last painter of a government which is about to crumble, seek on the other side of the frontier, "for want of a country, a place where art flourishes and politeness reigns."

Those who remained, lingering representatives of the school already proscribed by David—François Callet (1741-1824), Louis Jean François Lagrenée, the elder (1724-1805), the first an old member of the Royal Academy, author of numerous decorative works in the Boucher style and of the *Triumph of Flora,* bought by La Caze; the second, accepted at the Academy in 1755 for

his *Rape o Dejanire,* painted in the style of his master, Carl Van Loo, a prolific decorator of royal residences—were suddenly obliged to change their subjects if not their manner. And thus the mythological and gallant Callet painted *Bonaparte on the 18th Brumaire*, after having executed for the National Assembly *Louis XVI. Restorer of Liberty*. Lagrenée who, while he was at the head of the French Academy at Rome, had not been shrewd enough to divine Prudhon's talent, returned to Paris, passed safely through the years of the Revolution, was decorated by the Emperor in 1804, and died in the following year rectoral professor and honorary conservator of the Museum.

Antoine Vestier (1740-1824) who signed in 1786 Vestier, *pictor regis,* the somewhat heavy portrait of his wife dressed in a grand state costume composed of a garnet gown, yellow skirt, and straw hat with yellow feathers, and having at her feet her child and her dog and near her the portrait of her husband, merited Wille's praise for "the skill of his execution of all the parts, especially of satin garments." He owed his renown above all to his portrait of Henri Masers de Latude, whom he represented beside the Bastille in a state of demolition, with the rope ladders that had served for his escape and the *lettre de cachet* of February 28, 1756, nailed to a post. A journey in England, where he painted some portraits, had brought him into relations with the great portrait-painters; it is not difficult to find signs of their influence in the half-length woman's portrait bequeathed to the Louvre by La Caze with his fine collection.

The modern landscape-painters, who have been the principal agents of the transformation of painting in the course of the nineteenth century, are not sufficiently grateful to Claude Joseph Vernet (1714-1789), the chief of an illustrious dynasty and the venerable master of contemporaneous landscape-painting. Diderot, who called him by turns, "the great magician, the Lucretius of painting, the preacher of nature and the apostle of art," rendered him greater justice. If, in the generous ardour of his enthusiasm he raised his voice and employed words bigger than their object, it will be easy to understand that, to a "naturalist" such as he, and by the side of Boucher's artificial landscapes, Vernet's sea-pieces must have given the impression of a revelation and of a discovery of nature. Therefore, listen to Diderot: "Go into the country and turn your eyes towards the heavenly arch, observe well the phenomena of the instant, and you will believe that a piece has been cut out of the great luminous canvas lighted by the sun in order to dispose it upon the artist's easel; close your hand in the form of a tube that will let you see only a limited space of the great canvas, and you will admit that it is one of Vernet's paintings that has been taken from his easel and transported to the heavens." Upon another occasion, concerning a tempest scene: "Tired of hearing the lamentable cries of human beings, Jupiter rose from the table and said: 'Hail in Thracia and the plague in Asia! here a volcano, there a war, and in this place a famine!' Jupiter called that governing the world, and he was wrong; Vernet called it painting pictures, and he was right." Happily for himself, Vernet was more modest. "It is idle," he said, "to astound me with fine phrases upon my genius; I hear within me a certain voice which replies that this genius is only talent. However rare it may be, it is not sufficient to raise me to the rank of the first-class artists. I am inferior to each one of them in a part of art, but I have the advantage over most of them in reconciling nearly all the parts." This judgment, exempt from all false modesty and haughtiness, is very near the truth. Of the twenty-six paintings held by the Louvre, without counting the official series of the French ports, the *Bathers*, reproduced herewith, is not one of his most successful works; some of his Roman views, the *Castle of San Angelo*, for example, or the *Rotto Bridge*, would give a superior idea of his qualities as a painter, of the keenness of his vision, and of his knowledge of aerial perspective. What we here see chiefly is the landscape-painter who is occupied with the noble classical

Claude Joseph Vernet.
The Bathers.

Madame Vigée Le Brun.
Portrait of Madame Molé-Raymond,
of the French Comedy Theatre.

arrangement, which will soon be invoked by Valenciennes, Bidault and their school, and who

remembers Poussin. But even in this "composed" landscape, which is slightly marred by the anecdotal incidents multiplied in the foreground to "interest" the spectator, the atmosphere in the backgrounds has a limpidity and delicacy that recall the master's best inspiration in face of nature and enable us to understand the veneration professed for him by the great Corot. By these qualities he merited the title of "master and regenerator of modern landscape," with which he was greeted to the last days of his life, and the fervent admiration shown him not only by Diderot but by the young artists of his time.

Hubert Robert (1733-1808) solicited lessons from Claude Vernet, and placed himself under his protection, and it was by the master's advice that he started for Italy. He reached Rome at the moment when the archæologists filled the world with the report of their discoveries and when the poesy of antique ruins was soon to stir poets and men of letters. It was not as a respectful and learned archæologist that the young artist approached these discoveries, but as a painter free in manner and attracted by the picturesque and by adventures. His boldness as a tourist aided his budding renown, and during the twelve years he spent in Italy he explored the Eternal City and the land of the dead in all directions, modernising by

the sprightliness of his brush the old monuments and silent stones. When he returned to Paris he was celebrated, and entered the Academy triumphantly in 1766 as "painter of architecture" with a *View of the Port of Ripetta, at Rome.* It was in 1785 that he exhibited his painting of *Octavius's Arch.* We see in this work what means he employed to rejuvenate the antique subject and evoke life among the silence of ruins. These dogs that bark, the bustle of this fish-market installed under the monumental arch of the Roman portico, are his customary artifices. He uses them, also, in his *Bridge Across the Gard,* where, under the triple arcade of the majestic aqueduct, women come to draw water, a barque sails along the river, peasants and cavaliers animate the shore. Robert is a painter to the tips of his fingers; he loves his art passionately and is never tiresome. He was among those who were ill-treated by the Revolution. Imprisoned, condemned to death, saved from the scaffold by a lucky mistake that cost the life of a poor wretch bearing the same name, he always preserved his courage, good temper and love of his art. The stroke of apoplexy that he had on April 15, 1808, laid him low, brush in hand.

ANDRÉ MICHEL.

Hubert Robert.

The Marcus Aurelius Arch at Rome.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

F. Boucher.

Diana Quitting her Bath with One of her Companions.

F. Boucher.

A Pastoral.

J. B. S. Chardin.

Returning from School.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

J. H. Fragonard.

The Music Lesson.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

J. B. Greuze.

The Broken Jug.

J. B. Greuze.

The Village Bride.

J. B. Hilaire.

Reading.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

L. J. F. Lagrenée.

The Rape of Dejanira.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

Henri Regnault

Portrait of the Comtesse de Barck.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

Henri Regnault

A. Roslin.

A Young Lady Decorating Cupid's Statue.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

A. Vestier.

Portrait of the Painter's Wife.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

THE

GREAT MASTERS

IN THE

LOUVRE GALLERY

THE OPENING OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

FIRST VOLUME

SECTION IV.

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H. Rigaud.

Portrait of Unknown Persons.

Negative by Braun, Clément & C

THE OPENING OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century there were no longer any great artists in Europe. All the schools of painting had undergone a certain decline. Italy had long since closed the era of its glorious masters; in Spain, Velasquez and Murillo were dead without leaving any inheritors of their brush; England had amateurs, but still borrowed her artists from foreign countries; Flanders and Holland, after having dazzled the world with a Rubens and a Rembrandt and charmed it with their admirable minor masters, had seen them die one after the other at the moment when the new century opened; the pith that had been so powerful and rich, seemed to be exhausted there as elsewhere. France alone, who had by preference expended her strength in other directions, now turned her energy towards the field that seemed expressly abandoned to her. If she took a longer time than the other nations to produce her painters, she seems destined to lack them less quickly, and it happens that those who then appeared are, perhaps, the most faithful witnesses of her amiable genius.

French art affirmed itself before Europe at the same time as the authority of the national politics. It had ripened in the sun of Versailles and developed itself in all branches by the noble creations of

Louis XIV. Inferior up to that time to more favoured countries, France was soon to impose her genius in this domain, as she did in architecture and sculpture during the period then closing. The great artists of the seventeenth century, the sublime trinity of Poussin, Le Sueur and Claude Lorraine, and the stately and learned school of Charles Le Brun, represented only a part of the characteristics of the race. The large and valiant group that advances will complete the manifestation. This group is such that no nation can present a similar one in the eighteenth century. That century is, possibly, the period when the genius of French painting gave its fullest measure; in any case, it took possession of a place in the world that it did not hold before and that henceforth no one will contest its right to occupy.

It has long been the fashion to look down upon the eighteenth century, and no epoch of art has ever suffered a deeper and more unmerited contempt. Louis David and his school made a desperate and victorious war against their immediate predecessors, and as they had a real talent to support the authority of their convictions, they succeeded in tyranically obtruding their academical and sculptural ideal upon all minds. Fifty or sixty years ago the best contemporaneous painters of Louis XV. or Louis XVI. were as out of date as the furniture of the same epoch. This furniture, so sought after and so dearly paid for today, was stored in the garret by our grandfathers or burned as old wood. The paintings went to the second-hand dealers, and for a hundred francs a Watteau was had that is worth a hundred thousand francs to-day. To react against this mistaken taste has been the work of an active group of critics and amateurs who have succeeded in restoring to light the entire art of the eighteenth century.

If the Louvre possesses a large number of these paintings of our eighteenth century, the interest in which continually increases, it is not to accidental circumstances that this possession is due. It so happened that a notable part of the artistic production of the last century was made for the royal collections, through orders given by the Directors General of the King's Edifices, intelligent and devoted servitors of the State, whose taste was seldom mistaken. These paintings, which were regularly ordered from the best artists for the decoration of the royal mansions or to enrich the King's galleries, have formed an excellent foundation for the national collection, which, later on, received as much of the art treasure accumulated by the monarchy as the scattering by the revolutionary sales permitted.

The grand master of that epoch, Antony Watteau, remains a great painter of all epochs. Watteau has ardent admirers to-day who give him in the general history of art a rank equivalent to that of Raphael, Rubens, Rembrandt or Velasquez. At all events, he occupies in the French School the place that these masters hold in their respective schools, and this is sufficient for his glory. But here is a question that the critics have raised: ought we to class Watteau in the French School or in the Flemish School? The arguments of various kinds in favour of the second opinion are not wanting. When Watteau was born at Valenciennes, the old Flemish city had become French scarcely seven years before; was not the painter's family essentially Flemish, and was he not himself, as artist and colourist, a descendant of Rubens? This question might be eloquently developed, and nothing seems more convincing, at least on paper. Let us, however, go to the Louvre and stand before the *Finetta* or the *Embarkment for Cythera;* examine attentively the painting we shall have selected, and the whole demonstration vanishes. Watteau will appear to us not only a French painter, but the most French of all painters.

Certainly, Watteau had passionately studied Rubens, who appears more than once in the warm flesh-tints and in a delicious rumpling of stuffs; but he appears also in other and most different French masters, who not less than he have admired the Antwerp colourist and have even sometimes been possessed by him. If it be necessary to give briefly convincing examples, here are two names,

J. A. Watteau.
Finetta.

J. A. Watteau
A Heedless Young Man.

Boucher and Delacroix, although it may cause surprise to see them cited together. Perhaps certain affinities of origin predisposed Watteau quickly to comprehend and assimilate Rubens's technical skill, and it is known that among his first personal studies at Paris were reduced copies of a part of the glorious gallery of the Luxemburg, painted for Mary of Medici. Moreover, we have only to look at his work to be convinced that it is of French essence, French tradition and French joy. In his art of light and grace, where everything shows the influence of our buoyant air and sky, there circulate the sparkling charm and the essentially French quality of esprit. Watteau is French by facility of conception and vivacity of imagination, as he is by moderation and equilibrium, by all the delicacy of his taste, by his perception of life and his manner of presenting woman. If there are higher ways of comprehending life and expressing the soul's sensibility, there is none more in conformity with a tendency of our race, and this tendency largely predominated throughout the eighteenth century.

Watteau, therefore, legitimately opens the series of our painters of that period, as, fortuitously, the most illustrious artist by his genius is also the first chronologically. His short career is entirely embraced within the last years of Louis XIV. and the Regency. Born in 1684, he died at Paris in 1721, and it is during twelve or fifteen years that he produced the considerable amount of work that still remains, and the no less voluminous quantity, perhaps, that has been destroyed by the disdain of stupid people and the changes in taste. No life of a great artist is so little known and presents so many serious gaps, dangerous places that offer such temptation to the hypotheses of the imagination, which, in fact, have not been wanting. Here are the outlines of a brief biography that has been attempted.

The "Painter of Gallant Fêtes," according to the almost official title given him by his contemporaries, the artist who evoked so much elegance and created a whole world of revery, was the son of a poor roofer at Valenciennes. His vocation led him to Paris, where he lived miserably with a mediocre painter of religious emblems during the years of apprenticeship required by the customs of the time. Thence he went to the studio of a real artist, Claude Gillot, a singular painter, less known for his rare pictures than for his decorations of apartments, where the symmetrical taste of Berain was already heightened by a touch of the fanciful. A little later, another clever decorator, Claude Audran, utilised and developed the imaginative spirit of the young

Flamand. He lived with Audran at the Luxemburg, by the delightful public garden, where the fashionable society of the day promenaded, and where the painter's eyes and brushes doubtless made their first studies from life. He executed other studies from models, as pupil of the Royal Academy of Painting; then, in returning to visit his family, he met along the route to Flanders the troops of Marshal de Villars, and sketched military scenes as the subjects for his first paintings. In 1712 he was "accepted" at the Academy, but this was only the first step for becoming a full academician, the definite rank being accorded after the presentation of a specially-composed work. The same year the rich collectioner Crozat gave him a home in his mansion in the rue Richelieu, which was then the resort of artists, musicians and the intellectual society of the day. Other friends came forward, two of whom owe to this intimacy the remembrance of their names by history, M. de Julienne, an amateur, and Gersaint, a picture dealer. If Watteau observed society and took notes of its aspects and graces, he gave to it no part of his heart or time. Like all great producers, he was a solitary, isolated man. He disappeared sometimes for months without his friends knowing what had become of him, and when he reappeared after these retirements in a corner of some city or the country—he once went even as far as England—he brought back ten or more pictures made in these happy solitudes that give joy to the artist's brain and excite his fruitfulness. Watteau's character and habits thus create large spaces of the unknown in his career. It is even impossible to establish the chronology of his works; his canvases are not dated, and the engravings of them rarely supply this information. We know almost nothing about this artist, who is so near to our time, who lived in Paris and was praised by a great many of his contemporaries. The biography of Watteau is more difficult to constitute than that of a Florentine painter of the Quattrocento period.

There is, however, one precise date, the most triumphant moment of his life, the day when he entered the Academy, in 1717; not that an election of this kind is anything more than an incident in a great artist's life, but in Watteau's case it was the occasion to which we owe his masterpiece, the *Embarkment for Cythera*. The artist threw upon the canvas the sketch we have at the Louvre in order to fulfil his engagement contracted with the Academy several years before, and which he had long neglected by a caprice of fancy. He was obliged to furnish a painting for his reception before being definitely counted among this choice society, which included a noble list of great names of the past century, and by which his talent, although very different from that of his predecessors, had been at once fraternally recognised. Thanks to his joyous genius, this obligatory piece, which could only be a bore for him, represented the most charming inspiration of his gallant fêtes, and the favourable welcome accorded by its first public has become the ever-increasing admiration of posterity.

Every generation, perhaps every visitor, sees Watteau's *Embarkment for Cythera* in his own way, and develops, transforms, deforms or reconstructs the master's thought. One epoch admires above all the enchantment of the colours, the symphony of the light tones, the vaporous blues of the sky and water, the blond transparencies in which the personages and foliage bathe. Another period admires the profound delicacy of the symbol, the meaning of the languid couples that descend towards the golden barque, the aspect of the lovers marching along with a sweet delight, of those who scarcely rise from the grass, or who still hesitate to follow the happy ones; or again, the contrast of the deep woods, where the mysteries of love are arranged, with the azure and rocky isle where they will be accomplished. A great many inquisitive minds ask of this fascinating picture a simple historical testimony to the sentimental life during the Regency, and would wish to find under the travelling cloaks and the discreet disguise of this theatrical presentation the artist's contemporaries easily tempting these beautiful women to facile pilgrimages. And in our own day how many spectators confine themselves to taking their pleasure in this picture as they do in a rare and ambiguous poem of Paul Verlaine! And

J. B. J. Pater.

Comedians in a Park.

how many others, doubtless, seek and find therein the theoretical and practical doctrine, applicable to all centuries, of society flirtation!

We must say one word more: this finished work, in which the wavering of a hasty sketch shows itself in but few parts, is still only a sketch. The picture that Watteau painted from this sketch for his friend Julienne, and which has been engraved by Tardieu, was bought some time later by the King of Prussia, who was a great admirer of French art of that epoch, and it to-day ornaments a drawing-room in the old royal mansion at Berlin. The freshness of the colouring remains intact; the composition is fuller and contains more personages. The statue of Venus is complete; a flight of little Cupids that fills the boat's sail is prolonged to the wood, where it enchains the lovers with its rosy

ties. There is no more interesting study than to point out these differences between the sketch and the definite painting. When the general exhibition of Watteau's works is held in Paris—an exhibition called for by all the refined lovers of art, and which will enable us to appreciate in its entirety such a varied and scattered work—there is one wish that will be made by everybody. What a joy it would be for the lovers of the eighteenth century to see, if only for once, the sketch by the side of the original picture, and thus be able to remark the modifications of the artist's thought between his first idea and its definite expansion! How useful this comparison would be for comprehending the two masterpieces.

The signification of the other large painting by Watteau at the Louvre is accessible to a smaller number of persons, but for connoisseurs it offers a no less relishing feast of colour. Who is this singular personage all in white, whose powdered face beams in the middle of the La Caze collection

with such a silly, and at the same time sanctimonious smile? The arms hang down at the side of the large frock, and the trousers float above the white shoes with pink laces. This actor in some joyous farce must play the simpleton's part, that is to say the one that requires the most intelligence in order to be well sustained. It is the most popular personage of the Italian Comedy, *Gille*, who is likewise to be found at the Louvre in one of Lancret's small pictures, which also owes its origin to the same source as Watteau's composition. Behind Gille are his comrades, who are waiting to make their entry on the stage; two young men, one of whom is Mezzetin with his red cap, are standing beside Colombine, bareheaded, a red neckerchief over her shoulders, and, from the other side, the doctor with his sly and mischievous smile arrives on a donkey, wearing the black cap and collar of the part. Did Watteau paint the actors themselves, or did he simply portray some of his friends or neighbours, borrowing from the Italian comedy only the costumes? Let us accept the second supposition. He did not spend his time in the side-scenes of a theatre, which we should have to admit if the many pictures whose figures and details were taken from the Comedy had all been made from life. What we may say is that a whole series, and one of the most fascinating of his works, was executed after the month of June, 1716, the date when the government of the Regency, in accordance with public sentiment, restored to the Parisians their favourite spectacle, of which they had been deprived twenty years before by the severity of Louis XIV. Watteau found in the costumes and in the simple symbolism of the parts played by the Italian comedians, the means of arranging pleasing groups and expressing one of the forms of his revery. The arrival of these unexpected models was a lucky fortune for the painter. It has been said that he found other models of a very different kind, who shortened his life. This is an idle story that has not been confirmed by any facts. What he took from the Italian Comedy was the decoration and a lot of details; and of all the actors and actresses, the one he loved best—as is proved by the picture at the Louvre—was Gille; he loved him as a painter and on account of his white garments.

Woman, however, appears, and appears often in Watteau's work. The one whom he has painted is the woman of his dreams: delicate, laughing, just sentimental enough, as becomes her, not uncompassionate to declarations, the spoiled child of a flighty society that asked her only to please. He has represented her in all her movements, and her charming features in full or in profile are not studied with more care or fondled with a more fervent voluptuousness than the most fleeting lines of her neck. She is to be found still more living in his studies made from nature. Although a large number of Watteau's drawings have been soiled or lost, some of the finest ones are at the Louvre, and enable us to make a comparison: not one of his most perfect paintings reveals his art in a greater degree than these admirable red-chalk drawings, in which the living being is so ardently sketched by his pencil.

The other paintings by Watteau at the Louvre are: *A Party in a Park*, a lovely autumn landscape in which a joyous and tenderly idle company recreate and dream; the delicious *Slip*, where the young beauty has just stumbled upon the grass, and in trying to get up quickly, finds a new danger near by; the *Judgment of Paris*, *Jupiter and Antiope*, and *Autumn* represent his nude work. The brush work in *A Juggler*, which has been attributed to him, is minute and timid, and has little in common with his handling. The engraving of this work, moreover, has been signed with the name of a certain Mercier, who worked in London when Watteau was there. This painting might be taken away from the Watteaus in the La Caze collection, which would still be nobly furnished, for it has the master's two little gems: the *Heedless Young Man* and *Finetta*. These two figures are counterparts, the corresponding panels of a sentimental diptych, and ought not to be separated. The young man is dressed in a light-blue satin coat and pink cloak lined with blue, and wears a three-cornered hat with a

N. Lancret.

Summer.

blue cocade ; he is standing in front view, with arms extended and head inclined, and executes a careless dance-step. The young woman seems to play upon the guitar the air that animates the dancer ; she is seated upon a bench and wears a pearl-gray robe and silk cloak of a deeper tone; the gray ribbon passed around the cloak is attached to the guitar. The background, lightly sketched, is a dark evening sky, touched up with a delicate pink, and all the light of this little canvas, reflected here and there in the silk folds, is concentrated upon the mysterious head of the musician. Here we have Watteau's entire self : revery, youth and music.

If Watteau's work had completely disappeared, we should be more captivated by a really exquisite

group of painters of gallant scenes who lived at the same time or closely followed Watteau, and each one of whom shows, in imitating him, a genuine talent. Are not Lancret and Pater masters in the collections and galleries where their glorious model is absent? And may we not say the same of Debar, whose *Rustic Fête* is at the Louvre, and whose least important work attains a high price as a rarity, since the artist died at the early age of thirty ? These masters are also the authentic witnesses and representatives of the spirit of their time. Their language is not without charm, clearness or science, and they all have a right to be heard.

Pater, who comes from Valenciennes, as did Watteau, was also a passionate admirer of the Italian Comedy. The meeting of the *Comedians in a Park*, where we almost feel the master's light touch, might well be one of his compositions. In front of the rock-work basin of a fountain sheltered by a clump of trees, beside a stone table laden with bottle and fruits, one of the comedians,

dressed in brown clothes, has placed his arm around a young actress in a red bodice and striped skirt; behind them, and standing apart, Gille leans over and listens; in the foreground to the left, a guitar-player, seen from the back, is tuning his instrument while talking with a lady dressed in blue and seated near him; to the right a woman is kneeling beside a little dog, whilst old Cassandra, seated apart, contemplates these youthful groups. By the side of this rustic decoration we may place an interior scene, *Dressing*, which recalls an incident in the private life of a woman of the eighteenth century. The green and gold decoration of the chamber seems like a Martin varnish. The mirror has no transparency, and this is a serious defect which Boucher has generally avoided in his interior scenes. Yet it would be impossible to put more intelligence in the figures. The young woman that is being arrayed is the central part of the picture, which was made for the female servants. One of those, in red, warms some linen before the fire; another places a pin in the hair; while the third, deliciously modelled in half-tone, mischievously peeping out from behind the mirror, shows the gold piece that the young priest has given her for allowing him to hide himself behind the bed curtains. The child, who contemplates its mother's embellished beauty with its large eyes full of admiration, is also charming. This Pater is a masterpiece as a document of manners and customs and as a work of art.

As much may be said of the series of Lancrets entitled *The Four Seasons*. Lancret was a Parisian who made a lot of frieze panels for the mansions so splendidly decorated by Boffrand or by Robert de Cotte. *The Seasons* seem to be the sketch, pushed to the state of an easel-piece, of four compositions intended for placing in a drawing-room of that period. Exhibited in 1738, it is known that they were destined for the Muette chateau, that is to say for Louis XV. In the *Winter* panel the crowd is skating upon a frozen lake, on the left side of which is a rock-work fountain ornamented with two sailors, after the style of Lajoue. A man wearing a fur cap and enveloped in a red cloak, slides upon the ice; another, bareheaded, is putting on his skates, while a third helps up a lady who has fallen. On the border of the lake are several men, and women with their hands in their muffs, who watch the skaters. In *Spring* the young women in satin robes and the shepherdesses with their straw hats are already mingled. A musician plays on a galoubet, whilst a huntsman draws the cord of a net in which are some birds that have just been taken in the shade of the branches. The landscape background, with its river and port, has the softness of a Breughel. *Summer* is a thoroughly rustic scene. Four peasant women and two men dance in a ring in the middle of a field; a young man and a young girl have preferred to remain by the side of each other on a sheaf; two harvestmen are still at work, but it is evident that they will have finished their labour in an instant and joined the dancers who are calling them. *Autumn* is also an episode of the repose from rustic labour. It is the moment of the vintage, and women are seen in the distance gathering grapes from the vines; in the front two women and a man, seated on the ground, are eating before a table-cloth weighted with food. A young woman standing behind them with a basket in her hand, looks at the driver of the donkey that has just come in charged with the provision baskets. In a corner, the eternal loving couple talk and hide themselves, a sentimental detail that could not be wanting in a picture by Lancret.

The best painting by Carle Van Loo at the Louvre relates, by its subject, to these gallant fêtes. It is only a repast upon the grass, as in Lancret's *Autumn*, but how much more the personages are set off, and how much more richly served is the table! A company of noble lords and ladies has stopped at the appointed spot during the hunt, and the sportsmen and dogs are seen in a turn of the ground. The servants have spread the cloth on the edge of a wood; a footman takes the food out of a chest, a negro brings a basket of table linen and dishes, and a huntsman unloads a richly-harnessed mule. In the midst of all this movement the masters, skilfully grouped, eat, drink and

N. Lancret.

Autumn

chat. A sportsman in the foreground, with two coupled dogs, passes his time drinking bumpers of wine, oblivious to all that is going on around him; the other personages are more conscious of their duty towards the ladies. A young man in a red coat and with a napkin in his hand, offers a chicken wing to a young woman in a riding suit, with a three-cornered hat on her head, to whom other young men are very attentive. In the foreground a young nobleman in a pearl-gray coat trimmed with golden braid, turns gracefully towards a beauty in a white dress and gray cloak. It is not simply a plate that he offers her with this ardent movement: it is his heart, also, and the lady by her affected airs appears to accept one and the other. It is evidently a Court scene that is represented in this *Hunting Halt,* and the personages can be easily guessed, for the painter's signature is followed

by the date, 1737. The noble seignior in a pearl-gray coat recalls sufficiently well the features of Louis XV., and for his partner of that year, it is Madame de Mailly whom we must name. After all, Carle Van Loo, as well as his brother, Jean Baptiste, and his nephew, Louis Michael Van Loo, is a portrait-painter, or at least it is in this branch of art that this genial southern family has best shown its brilliant qualities; it is their portraits that gave the Van Loos such a vogue in the last century. By Carle Van Loo, who was the King's chief painter, the Louvre has two excellent portraits, one of a queen, Maria Leczinska, and the other of an artist, Soufflot. However, to be entirely sincere, while at the same time rendering justice to their unquestionable talent, we are obliged to say that the French School could very well do without the Van Loos. It is not the same with the great painters whose names now come to our mind.

The French portrait-painters are really an admirable race. The national genius, which has shown

such an exact knowledge and made such a profound study of human nature in literature, and especially in dramatic literature, reveals the same gifts in the works of its painters. French art, human in every sense of the word, had devoted, perhaps, the best of its strength to the study of character in physiognomies, to comprehending the soul by the exterior that reveals it. This is a very old quality of our race. What is best in our sixteenth century painting, which is explicitly the century of Montaigne, are the portraits by the Clouets and their followers. The literary portrait, so freely drawn by our moralists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and which so greatly amused the drawing-rooms and polite society of those epochs, corresponds chronologically with the work of our best painters of humanity. Claude Lefèbvre is a contemporary of Saint Evremont, as Mignard is of La Bruyère. Still, it is, perhaps, the following century that places our school in the front rank and gives to the portrait its triumphal hour in France.

In the first half of the eighteenth century alone there was a group of men such as Rigaud, Largillière, Nattier, Tocqué, La Tour, and others of less celebrity, who are contemporaneous with these masters of portrait-painting, without speaking of artists that were not specialists, like Watteau and Desportes, who have left more than one masterpiece of this kind. Such a glorious group is sufficient for the honour of a school. Let us see, at a rapid glance, how this group is represented at the Louvre.

The dates place Rigaud in the eighteenth century, because he died in 1743, and had worked until the end; still, we must recognise that he owed his education and his style to the preceding century. Hyacinthe Rigaud y Ros came up from Perpignan to Paris, and was already a fashionable artist and had begun to replace Mignard for the Court portraits, when he was called to Versailles by Louis XIV. to paint the portrait of Philip V., who was about to occupy the Spanish throne. This choice definitely established his popularity; and as the young king wanted a portrait of his grandfather for Madrid, Rigaud had the honour, in the following year, 1701, of working with the Grand King. These two paintings are to-day at the Louvre. The portrait of Louis XIV., which became the official portrait of the last part of the reign, and was multiplied by repetitions and copies, has become the model, often imitated, of the most stately images of modern sovereigns. The royal painters throughout Europe have more or less imitated Rigaud, as their masters sought to reproduce something of Versailles in their surroundings. This image is, in truth, a noble figure, standing before a gilded throne, proudly leaning on the sceptre that he holds in his right hand, while his left rests upon the hip, above his sword. The royal blue mantle, strewn with fleurs-de-lis and lined with ermine, is crossed by the golden collar of the Order of the Holy Ghost; the crown and hand of justice rest upon a stool; an ample red drapery is raised above the throne, showing behind it a marble column and the entrance to a hall representing the Gallery of Mirrors. The man, however, does not disappear amid the splendour of this decoration; on the contrary, the artist has given full value to the elegance of the intentionally uncovered limbs and to the haughtiness of the countenance, slightly rejuvenated and encircled by a brown wig. Rigaud has displayed his complete talent in this majestic canvas, and, the importance of the subject aiding, it may be considered as his master-piece. Still, there are others of the same quality in the immense work that he has left, for he painted his contemporaries by hundreds, and his brush seems never to have known fatigue or infirmity. Princes, cardinals, bishops, dukes, marshals, magistrates, artists, grand seigniors and high-born ladies, in a word, the whole of the French society of his time was portrayed by him. He makes this society live again before our eyes, not without a slight monotony of arrangement and a somewhat southern emphasis, but with a rigorous reality, where the sumptuousness of the stuffs and the armour bring into relief the nobility of bearing and character. Hyacinthe Rigaud is not only a great revealer of physiognomies; he is the most

Carle Van Loo.

A Hunting Hall.

truthful of historiographers, and his labour in this field is not the least important, as it extends from Louvois's ministry to the death of Cardinal de Fleury, embracing the second half of the reign of Louis XIV., the Regency, and all the first part of Louis XV.'s reign.

The portraits of *Robert de Cotte* and *Cardinal de Polignac* belong to a period subsequent to that of the grand royal portrait at the Louvre; but the finest series of this same period is at the Versailles Museum, the *Louis XV. as a Child* and the *Marquis of Dangeau*. Of the previous period we find several specimens at the Louvre; for example, the *Bossuet*, an effigy as eloquent and solid as one of the great bishop's sermons; the little *Duke of Créqui*, so elegant and juvenile in his precocious armour; finally, a group of three members of the same family, a young married couple and their child, where the blue of a robe has become a little heavy with time, but where the excellence of the flesh modelling, the stuffs and the expressions reveal the best work of Rigaud. Who are the "unknown personages" of the catalogue? Doubtless some rich, middle-class Parisians, as Rigaud portrayed a good many of this class before being called to paint higher personages. A single portrait of this kind is marked upon the detailed list that he kept of his works; it is a portrait made in 1692, for which the artist received 490 francs. I propose to call the "unknown personages" of the Louvre, according to the indication of Rigaud's list, *M. Leonard, his wife and his daughter*—but they will all the same remain unknown.

The assemblage of persons and family groups are more numerous in the work of Nicolas Largillière, who remains Rigaud's rival with posterity. The most celebrated piece of this kind is the painter's family, which is at the Louvre. There are only three figures in the portrait: the father, mother and one of their daughters; a smaller and less important canvas, at Versailles, shows all the family. What causes the Paris portrait to be so much admired is the remarkable technical skill displayed by the artist. The painter, wearing a long wig and dressed in a gray coat, is seated upon a rock, facing the spectator; his sportsman's tastes are indicated by a gun, a dog and a piece of game. His wife, sitting opposite and in three-quarters profile, wears a low-cut red robe lined with white satin, a

chemisette trimmed with blue ribbons, and a lace bow upon her powdered hair. In the centre is the daughter, dressed in a white gown with golden embroideries, flowers in the hair and a sheet of music in her left hand; she inclines her head slightly, raises her eyes and sings. All of Largillière's gifts are visible in this composition. His contemporaries said that he had sufficiently studied nature to do without her direct aid, if need be, and that he painted all the details of his portraits from memory; his draperies, especially, were painted from inspiration and without even the help of a dummy, and were thus more easily subordinated, so it appears, to the general effect. It is with this freedom that he executed the portrait now at the Louvre. There is more delicacy here than with Rigaud, less preparation, a perfect naturalness in the expression, and a rich and flexible colouring of dainty grays that Tocqué and Chardin will again find later on.

Largillière entered the Academy in 1686, presenting as his reception piece the portrait of Charles Le Brun, the King's head painter, which remains one of the finest portraits of the seventeenth century. Born a few years before Rigaud, he survived him until 1746, but his weakened old age did not permit him to work as long. His models are, in general, less brilliant, for the Court people did not give him many orders. He was, on the other hand, the favourite painter of the rich Parisian middle-class, of the city authorities, and of the Paris Parliament. His portraits of magistrates are full of teaching for psychologists as well as for colourists. He excelled in encircling with a powdered wig and a cap the meditative and fine faces of jurists, and to repose the carefully designed hands upon the deadened or rich tones of the red robes.

Jean Marc Nattier did not have the same austere tastes. He was, above all, a painter of women, let us even say the Painter of Woman, for it is nearly always the same one under divers names, and all his portraits, with few exceptions, are based on this unique theme: the mythological or worldly apotheosis of the eighteenth century woman. It is to this element—which does not exclude very high qualities as a painter, but does not require them, either—that his works owe the astonishing esteem they have enjoyed for several years, and that he himself owed his celebrity and success during his life. This artist, with his coarse features, small eyes and peasant hands, such as Voiriot has portrayed him, in an embroidered vest and lace frill, holding his portfolio, happens to be the most subtle evocator of the ideal woman of his epoch. He had the art of obliterating, as he said without any malice, "the fugitive shade existing between homeliness and beauty." In presence of his embellishing brushes no woman found herself homely. Thus they all wanted to be painted by such a skilful readjuster of charms, draped by him, or undraped as Hebe or Flora, painted by him in this bright red that softens the modelling of his faces and gives a sort of family air to all of them. What lady, in fact, judged herself so destitute of charms as not to hope to see herself embellished by the delicious flatterer who had been surnamed "the Pupil of the Graces?"

The factitious art that resulted from this infatuation has been very agreeably ridiculed by Cochin, one of the most intelligent artists of that day. It is interesting to read what this master of drawing and engraving wrote about Nattier's portraits when the artist was in his decline. In his "Collection of some Documents Concerning the Arts," published in 1757, Cochin says: "We see portraits that seem contrary to decency, where women are almost naked, with a simple chemisette that leaves the neck, the arms and the hips uncovered. It is apparently their undress summer garment. To this suit, which is not a suit, is added a piece of blue, violet or other coloured silk, which serves to cover nothing; it passes behind the person and is brought forward upon a hip. It is difficult to imagine how this attire keeps from falling to the ground, not being attached to anything, or that it was not embarrassing to carry, being composed of several yards of stuff. Some of these ladies dress their hair with clusters of grain or other ornaments according to their fancy, with which they mingle

H. Rigaud.
Portrait of Louis XIV.

pearls. It appears that they take pleasure in leaning against earthern pots filled with water, which they overturn, seemingly to water their gardens, and this gives us reason for believing that they are very fond of agriculture. . . . One of their principal amusements is to raise birds, even the most difficult ones to tame, such as eagles, to whom they offer white wine in golden cups." This delicate irony is the protest of the real spirit of a century throughout which the great charm of style in art as in literature lay in its naturalness.

Hereditary gifts and the surroundings in which he was born, made Nattier an artist, and his biography resembles in this respect that of more than one of the masters of his time. He was the son of an historical painter, member of the Royal Academy, and of a mother who had a talent for miniature painting. When he was fifteen years old he made drawings after Charles Le Brun's great battle scenes, and his father soon had him draw for engraving, with the conciseness required by such work, the twenty-four paintings of the Rubens gallery at the Luxemburg, which Watteau had already studied, and which have had so much influence upon the education of French painters. The Duke of Antin offered to the young artist a vacant place among the King's pensioners at the French Academy in Rome. Work already begun and in hand prevented his acceptance of the offer, and he regretted it all his life. We do not share this regret: Nattier was not gifted with a sufficiently strong personality to live in Italy without danger. A sojourn there would have changed his native qualities without giving him else than an indifferent education in the false style, and we should have lost a charming note in the art of the eighteenth century. If Nattier did not go to Rome he was at least upon the point of going to Russia. Peter the Great, who wished to take back some artists with him, had invited Nattier to Amsterdam, and given him an order for a portrait of the Empress Catherine, and a large painting representing

himself at the Battle of Pultawa. The Czar expected that the artist would accompany him to St. Petersburg and considered the matter settled. At the last moment Nattier declined; the journey was so long, the country so unknown—and then, he was so well fixed in Paris, where he had just been received at the Academy. Our painter once more missed the opportunity to devote himself to historical painting, for which he believed he was born.

Accidental circumstances determined his career as a portrait-painter: loss of money in Law's banking scheme, a marriage that was believed to be a rich one and which brought only a pretty wife and lots of children. But his reputation became quickly established, and had he been less disinterested, he would have soon gained his fortune. The first portraits that made him known were those of Marshal de Saxe, which is at Dresden; Mademoiselle de Clermont taking the waters, which is at Chantilly; Mademoiselle de Lambesc, which is at the Louvre. The Duchess of Mazarin introduced him to the Court in 1740 by giving him an order to paint the portraits of her two nieces, the beautiful Demoiselles de Nesle, who became Madame de Chateauroux and Madame de Flavacourt. "These two portraits," records his daughter, Madame Tocqué, "which are, so to speak, M. Nattier's master-pieces, made so much talk at Court that they excited the curiosity of the Queen, who, after having seen them, was so struck by their perfect likeness that she at once ordered M. Nattier to begin Madame Henrietta's portrait." Is it not piquant to see the good Maria Leczinska order from a painter the portrait of one of her daughters because she had admired that of her husband's mistress? The King could not remain behindhand; he gave Nattier sittings shortly afterwards, then sent him to the Fontevrault Abbey to paint the portraits of his youngest daughters, who were being educated there, which he wished to offer as a surprise to the Queen. The great success of the three Mesdames de Fontevrault, which are, in fact, exquisite works, finally established Nattier's notoriety. He had fifteen years of triumph, followed by one of those changes in fashion which are, in France, the ransom of the exaggerated reputations made by a vogue. "The war—this plague of arts—the fickleness of the public and the desire for novelty all united to cause him the most melancholy neglect. An almost complete abandonment succeeded the eager concourse to which he was accustomed; finally, nothing remained of all his numerous occupations except a few works to finish for the Court, begun in happier days." Thus speaks the filial piety of a loving daughter. Family affections and friendships won by his generous heart softened his afflictions; but he was seized with a powerful malady, and the last four years of his life were spent in agony. When he died, in 1766, no one thought of him any more; he had long disappeared from a society that quickly forgot, and whose ideal he no longer represented. More truthfulness was demanded in a portrait, such as men like La Tour and Tocqué knew how to express, and to whose glory the kind-hearted Nattier had been the first to contribute. It has needed the eclecticism of our century, and the taste of the last few years, to restore to its rightful place of honour the name of the portrait-painter who was for so many years the most brilliant of all.

There exist a great many genuine portraits by Nattier, without counting those that are manufactured, and the copies, often very good, which were made in his own studio and which he frequently retouched before their departure. Several of his canvases add an historical interest to that of art. Nattier was for twenty years the favourite painter of the royal family. He reproduced a great many times, and under various forms, the features of the King, the Queen and all the children, as well as those of the princesses of royal blood, the Orleanses, Condés and Contis, to say nothing about the numerous persons that Louis XV.'s own will and pleasure allied irregularly but narrowly to the royal family, such as Madame de Chateauroux and Madame de Pompadour, for example. It is because the genial artist was almost the official Court painter that he has a greater importance for the history of the French Court than any other painter of his time; and, luckily, the most precious series of his

N. de Largillière.

Portrait of the Painter Charles Le Brun.

works is the one preserved to-day at Versailles in the same surroundings where his models lived. It is at Versailles, also, that remains his master-piece, one of the rare portraits in which he attained the high style, that of the Queen, Maria Leczinska, who, when she sat for this portrait, obliged him to leave his mythology in peace and to paint her in a walking costume. Therefore, completely to understand Nattier and see the artist under all the aspects of his talent we must go to Versailles. The Louvre, however, is sufficiently rich in good Nattiers to enable us amply to judge an art for which we must say that fashion was, possibly, always too partial.

First of all, here is the *Magdalen*, which we must be careful not to take as an image of holiness, notwithstanding the desert rock where she screens her penitence. It is a portrait, a Court portrait, and, if we admit the result of recent researches, even the portrait of a royal mistress: Madame de Mailly, painted for Louis XV. before he had ceased to love her, and before the sincere repentance of this high-born sinner had made a reality of this allegory. Besides all of the King's mistresses, Nattier painted all of the King's daughters, and one of the finest portraits of these young ladies is that of Madame Adelaide, singing a piece of music. In one of those vague and gorgeous architectural interiors where the artist loved to make unexpected draperies wave, the princess is seated in full face, dressed in an ample blue skirt trimmed with black fur, a black ribbon around the neck, and a daisy pricked in the slightly powdered hair. With her left hand she turns over the pages of the music-book open upon her lap, and with the other beats time with an affected air that nature had not given her. At her feet a little black dog plays with a sheet of music. There is a singular richness in this composition; the dominant note of the blues is heightened by the golden embroideries and lace trimmings, while the eyes look with pleasure upon all this enchanting and complicated arrangement. Nattier's models never sat in these rich surroundings, but they pleased the society painter and enabled him to come in contact with nature, so to speak, on the days when he was tired of dressing out nymphs and goddesses.

There exists a repetition of this blue portrait of Madame Adelaide, for which 5,000 francs were paid in 1758, at Versailles, where it is hung opposite the red portrait of Madame Henrietta playing the base-viol. The Louvre also possesses, without indicating it, a portrait of Madame Henrietta, who was the favourite daughter of Louis XV., and whom Nattier portrayed several times. The head of the portrait in the La Caze collection designated as *A Daughter of Louis XV. as a Vestal* is identical with that of the large red portrait at Versailles. The features, the regard, and the inclination of the head are the same; there are some slight differences in the head-dressing, which requires a veil over the vestal's face. It is certainly Madame Henrietta who is here represented beside a small altar where the sacred fire is burning, thus attesting her renunciation of marriage. This is not the first time the princess assumed this character; she was already represented as a vestal in the allegorical figure of Fire, which forms part of the *Four Elements* by Nattier — portraits of the four elder sisters — and which seem to be lost to-day. These comparisons, which might be multiplied, show what a fondness the royal daughters had for having their portraits painted by their favourite artist; they preferred him to all the others because he knew how to heighten the beauty of those who were agreeable-looking and give a charm to the most unpromising. How could he neglect any means to satisfy such noble models when it was sufficient to be simply a woman in order for him to try to render her pretty?

It seems that he was not obliged to make an effort—but what do we know about it?—to render bewitching the souvenir of Mademoiselle de Lambesc. The painting was exhibited at the Salon of 1737 under the designation: *Mademoiselle de Lambesc, of the House of Lorraine, as Minerva, Arming and Consecrating her Brother, the Count of Brionne, to the Art of War.* She is seated, dressed in a mythological costume consisting of a white, low-cut bodice, a golden girdle, a blue cloak upon the knees and a tiger-skin thrown over the shoulder. In one hand she holds the helmet that justifies her name of Minerva, and with the other negligently finishes buckling her young brother's cuirass. The boy, standing, wears a yellow jerkin, red stockings, and a white sash, from which hangs a sword; he supports his left hand upon the staff of a red banner. Military and other details, and the inevitable drawn drapery, compose the furnishings of the picture. Although the faces are cold in expression, this is one of Nattier's best works, for he succeeded this time in uniting the two things which he appears to have loved above all others and which he was almost always able to render: feminine beauty and infancy.

One of the daughters of the "Pupil of the Graces" married the Parisian artist Louis Tocqué, who was only ten years younger than his father-in-law, and who was also a great portrait-painter. It might reasonably be supposed that Tocqué would gain by this alliance the favour of the Court, where he was frequently called. It was not so, however, and yet it appears that Tocqué was the first to go to Versailles. The Louvre has by him, among other works, two admirable canvases painted for the King, and dated 1739 and 1740. The first represents the Dauphin at the age of ten years, the other shows the Queen at full length. The portrait of the young prince is a complete picture. The artist has placed his model in a study; by his side is a large globe, and upon a superb bronze table lie in disorder books, maps and pencils. The royal apartment is somewhat fantastic; it contains columns and floating draperies, which indicate an official arrangement. The rest of the composition is charming, done in light, brilliant colours that harmonise well with the youthfulness of the model. The Dauphin wears a red coat and a white vest with gold embroideries, across which passes the blue ribbon of the Order of the Holy Ghost; if his physiognomy is a little insignificant it si because truth required the painter thus to render it. The Queen's portrait has not all the qualities of that of her son, and includes, on the contrary, the same defects. It is not a contemplative and living work, such as Tocqué loved to paint, but a cold composition with all the solemnity of official effigies. The amiable

J. M. Nattier.

Portrait of One of Louis XV.'s Daughters as a Vestal.

by Braun, Clément & C

Maria Leczinska, so reserved and simple, who knew how to fill worthily the part at Court of the neglected and respected wife, would have furnished the best of models for the simple and familiar master-piece. Nattier, for once in his life, knew how to find this character; but it is La Tour who, above all, has best rendered the Queen. She sat before the independent artist wearing a simple lace kerchief and a gewgaw mantelet, in the easy attitude of her private life. To Tocqué she showed only the exterior of her royal existence, the erect head and gala dress; the painter's merit is to have divined something more.

He had, in fact, simply to execute an official order given by the Director General of the Royal Edifices, and destined to be reproduced by the copyists of the King's gallery and to form a set counterpart to the portrait of Louis XV. Maria Leczinska is represented standing in a vast ante-chamber with columns, before a very elegant paneled console that serves as a support for the crown resting upon the classic fleur-de-lis cushion. The only movement made by the Queen, astonished at finding herself there, is to point to the crown, a movement singularly out of keeping with the truthfulness of the character. This conventionalism admitted, and also the somewhat ostentatious display of the folds of the royal blue fur-lined mantle, the painter has taken delight in rendering the physiognomy of his model. He expresses all the charm that remains to the woman of thirty-seven years, who was never handsome, who was ten times a mother, and who experienced the keenest sufferings of the heart. Her face, with a sympathetic half-smile, looks directly at the spectator; an intelligent kindness beams in the countenance, as well as the modesty of the woman who gracefully wears the rich costume, but who knew so much better how to do without it. At the same time, all the skill of the good costumer is shown in the white, flowered dress. A diamond brooch, with three long pearl pendants, is attached to the bodice, and the long folds of the silver brocade unroll the richness of their branches, flowers, and embroidered foliage, down to the satin slipper, which is scarcely seen. This portrait is dated 1740. The one that Carle Van Loo painted seven years later is, at first sight, more attractive. In it we see the King's bust and the Queen's little dog; and, with the evident determination almost entirely to conceal the royal mantle, and the delicious fancy of the gold flowering and silver bows, it is not the official portrait in all the usual arrangement. Tocqué alone had received the order to paint this one, and got over the difficulty

and vexation of such a task by deciding to study the individual physiognomy in a State portrait. It is this side of his talent that renders him almost always superior to Nattier; the father-in-law saw only the outside of his models, and often even transformed this external appearance by making it insipid; the son-in-law, with no less sense of colour, has more knowledge of characters, and a more varied fashion of comprehending life.

We should form an incomplete judgment of Tocqué in looking only at these canvases, the interest of which is, above all, historical. He is thoroughly himself in his portraits of middle-class women, financial men, and writers. He excelled in giving to each one of his faces the habitual wrinkle of the thought, or the stamp of the profession; he rendered with nearly as much charm and power as a La Tour the lively physiognomies of literary men and bright women. His reputation soon became general, and he was invited abroad; more adventurous in his ripe age than Nattier in his early manhood, he did not refuse this good fortune. He first went to Russia, whither he was called by the Empress Elizabeth in 1757; he remained in St. Petersburg two years and painted a great many noble faces. It is said that the most illustrious of these visages shows with exaggeration the primitive Moscovite type and a very short nose; Tocqué was a poor courtier, and refused, even in favour of an Empress a little ripe and still more coquettish, to attenuate nature in the slightest degree. Upon quitting Russia, Tocqué went to Denmark, called thence by King Frederick V.; he made the portrait of this monarch and also those of the Queen and most of the members of the royal family. This conscientious man thus carried to the Northern Courts the secret of French elegance, and represented the most serious and refined qualities of French art. He returned home loaded with gifts and honours. Up to that time he had been an active producer, but henceforth did scarcely any work, for reasons that are not fully known, and that the need of repose does not suffice to explain. A second visit to Denmark was his last artistic effort; he died soon after his return, in 1771, at the Louvre, where he was lodged by the King's licence.

Tocqué ceased exhibiting his paintings in 1759, and Nattier in 1763. After them the favourite Court painters were Francis Hubert Drouais, who is inferior to them, and Louis Michael Van Loo, Carle's nephew. Van Loo's likeness, by himself, in his studio, is one of the good pieces of this series of portraits of French artists gathered together in one of the galleries of the Louvre, and of which more than one choice work would be worth mentioning. The master-piece is, perhaps, the *Portrait of Oudry*, by Jean Baptiste Perronneau. Oudry is represented before his canvas, upon which he has just lightly sketched a few white chalk lines. He wears a green velvet jacket, with an under-garment of a paler green. Hanging negligently from his pocket is a striped handkerchief; the powdered wig, lace collar and sleeves, show that it is, all the same, the prepared costume of a painter who has the honour of giving lessons to the Queen and painting the King's dogs. Oudry has been caught and fixed in a perfectly natural pose. His simple and kindly look sparkles as at the moment when the artist begins his investigation; the hands, especially, are marvellous, the left one holding the brushes, the thumb passed through the large palette hole, the right held out in a familiar movement of conversation. This single portrait would be sufficient to assure Perronneau a good rank in our school if he did not merit a still better one by his pastels, which have made him an often lucky rival of La Tour himself.

Visitors never tire of returning to the portraits of the eighteenth century, and the fashion that clings to them with so much fidelity is sustained by the surest instinct of true art. There are few works of this kind at that epoch which do not recommend themselves by some merits, and we feel that we commit a sort of injustice in passing by in silence names which deserve to be remembered. Painters like Alexis Belle, Robert Tournières, Hubert Drouais the father, Grimou, Nonnotte, Raoux, may still be appreciated, even after the masters who rendered the first part of the century illustrious.

F. Lemoyne.

Hercules and Omphale.

The excellent De Troy, who covered so many large canvases with historical scenes in which neither colour nor the science of the whole composition is wanting, condenses all his qualities in simple portraits that have a chance of lasting longer. His own portrait was painted by his comrade Aved, as a reception piece for the Academy, and it is still a very fine picture, honourable alike to the model and the painter. Aved has at the Louvre, a better known work, *Mirabeau in his Library*. The liberal economist, the indefatigable philanthropist, the "Friend of Man," in a word, as he called himself, is standing, still young, in the centre of the "city of books," in the most simple and elegant morning-dress. His mauve silk dressing-gown floats softly upon his white vest. He holds in his hand a folio bound in calf; but the very infatuated gentleman does not intend to be forgotten in this room that might serve for any scribbler; the open pages on the table are Cæsar's *Commentaries*, and beside the silver inkstand shines the unexpected steel of a cuirass. It requires nothing less than an exquisite harmony of tones in the rare soberness of the composition to blend and make us accept all this symbolism, all these intentions and pretensions.

There are also portraits, and very fine ones, in the immense work of a painter worthy to be counted among the best, and who missed being classed in this rank only because he could not decide to choose among the different kinds in which he excelled. Francis Desportes is, however, essentially the painter of sportsmen, and the two portraits by him that the Louvre possesses are precisely those of hunstmen. In the first the personage is seated upon a stone, dressed in a mauve suit and gray gaiters, the face turned squarely in front, the wig well parted in the middle above the forehead and marking the Louis XIV. epoch. He has a ferret in his lap, and by his side a hare and a duck; a spaniel stands behind. The second picture is of the same period and more important. The artist has represented himself taking rest after a pleasure that he doubtless loved before painting its episodes. He has, in this work, improved the occasion to shine in all the branches of his talent, which is explained by the destination of the painting, it being his reception piece for the Academy.

The model is seated, bare-headed, a gun in the right hand; he wears a blue jacket, violet trousers, leather gaiters, a gray cloak and a white cravat negligently tied around the neck. A large red hound with wiry legs and elegantly foreshortened, turns his intelligent head towards his master, who is patting with his left hand another dog that hangs out his tongue and places his paw upon the game. At the huntsman's feet are several hares, ducks and partridges. The hair and feathers are treated in the most curious variety of manners. All the details, moreover, are perfectly subordinated to the principal figure, who retains in this full but not overcharged composition, a real nobility and strong relief.

It was at the school of the Flamand, Nicasius, established in Paris at the time when Desportes came there to study, that the Champenois master received the traditions of Frans Snyders. He learned from those traditions to characterise by the brush the different animal species, and to give to hunting scenes that life and animation which Rubens's companion pushed to passion and fury. *Wolf Hunting*, which is at the Louvre, and other less-known paintings, are Snyders toned down after the French fashion. The first impressions received at the studio marked the direction of Desportes's career, and implanted a taste for certain forms of life that he was never to lose. If he retained from his two years' sojourn at the Polish Court, where he portrayed King Sobieski and his suite, the habit and practice of portrait-work, it is to portraits of animals that he generally preferred to apply himself.

Enough will never be said of the place that hunting occupied in the old royal existence, and that it still partly retains at the present day. In France, especially, hunting parties were the favourite sport of the King and Court. The forests in the neighbourhood of Paris, the grand park of Versailles, the woods at Marly, Meudon, Rambouillet, Compiègne and Fontainebleau, carefully kept up and stocked with big game, were enlivened on shooting days by a brilliant cavalcade. On those occasions the ladies' carriages were surrounded by a veritable army of servants, whippers-in, beaters-up, huntsmen and officers, and the echoes resounded from the barking of a pack of three hundred hounds. Louis XIV., who gave importance and prestige to his smallest acts, needed a painter as historian of his chosen amusements and biographer of his hunting-train. Desportes was the artist specially attached to the royal chases. He earned a large pension by them, as well as his artistic liberty, lodgings at the Louvre, and the opportunity of enjoying his favourite sport. He satisfied, in fact, the master most capable of worthily recompensing an artist devoted to his glory. Desportes was not only invited to all the hunts to study the divers incidents of the day, the stags at bay, the hounds, the quarry, etc.; he was also charged to work at the kennel, and to paint from life the finest dogs of the royal pack. He had acquired such practice in catching the physiognomies of these animals, that in showing the sketches of them united on the same sheet, he was able to give the King the satisfaction of recognising them and of calling each one by his name. We owe to Desportes's official functions the fine series of dog-pictures at the Louvre, which immortalises the Grand King's pack. Desportes also had the order to paint, as soon as they arrived at the Versailles Menagerie, the rare animals and birds sent to His Majesty; this is another branch of his work, requiring accuracy and knowledge of nature, in which he does not appear to have been surpassed.

Desportes's name naturally suggests that of Oudry, who was his successor as painter of the royal chases. What the master had been for Louis XIV. the pupil was for Louis XV. He held the position more superbly, if it were possible, the day when he began to paint the series of large cartoons, representing the King hunting in the principal sites of the crown domains, which were reproduced in tapestries. It was a lucky fortune for the Gobelins Manufactory, where Oudry was the Director during several years. In addition to these large decorative pieces, which give the most complete information we have about the old royal chases, Oudry painted the favourite dogs of Louis XV., with their names artlessly inscribed on the canvases. The beautiful Blanche, watching

M. Q. De La Tour.

Portrait of Madame de Pompadour (Pastel).

a pheasant behind a tuft of broom, is one of the best works of the series. In this piece his manner comes nearest to that of the master who had been the best animal painter in France.

Desportes had the instinct, the simple confidence and grace, of impulsive artists, and was quite spontaneous in his interpretation of nature. Oudry shows more science and reflection; he is better skilled in the resources of his art, and knows more fully how to group his subject and utilise masses of light. His colouring is not so vivid or transparent as that of Desportes, and is even sometimes dull and monotonous; but he applied the academical rules of composition with an irreproachable art, and used, as well, to write about and discuss them. For that matter, Oudry was the most thorough painter of hunting scenes, with all the experience that this kind of art requires in landscape and portraits. The landscape-painter is especially worth noticing at the historical moment when he worked, and his *Farm*, which is at the Louvre, with the study of the rustic surroundings, is, in spite of its defects of colouring, a very curious attempt. Finally, we may recall that he painted for the apartments of the Dauphin and Dauphine, at Versailles, a series of subjects taken from La Fontaine's "Fables," which is now dispersed. The animal-painter, landscape-painter, and skilful master of composition, all have their share in this illustration of the great fabulist.

By this series Oudry lead sus towards what is called genre-painting, that is to say the painting of every-day life; but with him we are still far from the expanding of Greuze. The "genre" at the beginning of the eighteenth century was generally the "gallant fête." Exceptions might be found, however, without going out of the Louvre, and the best ones are those suggested to Peter Subleyras by three of the good La Fontaine's tales. The touching history of the *Hawk* is rendered in a way that shows a very delicate comprehension of the little poem rejuvenated from Boccacio. This picture is that of a master who was able to express sentiment in the smallest faces, and who, by a skilful arrangement of light, as well as by the abundance of colouring, showed that he knew how to profit by the best examples of the Dutch masters.

We judge better of Subleyras's talent in these little canvases, which he did not believe would survive, than in the vast religious paintings made in Italy, where he spent the greater part of his life, patronised by the Pope Benedict XIV. Not that his *Repast at Simon's House*, for example, or his

Saint Basil's Mass, which is shown in mosaic work in Saint Peter's at Rome, are mediocre or without artistic merit. They are equal to the works of De Troy and Restout, his contemporaries and competitors; but it is certain that the religious sentiment as interpretated by the artists of the eighteenth century no longer interests us. We should even say the same of the mythological painting of that epoch if we did not find in it some good technical parts and some very significant testimony to the moral and decorative tastes of the time.

Let us look for this testimony in the works of Coypel and Natoire, the only mythological painters who are worthy of being named before Boucher. Charles Antony Coypel, son of Antony Coypel, head painter of Louis XV., himself raised to this dignity in 1747, is the last in date of the four Parisian painfers who bore this name. When we compare his works with the part he played in the world and the reputation he had during his life, we become a little sceptical about the duration of artistic glory and the value by which it is established. No official or social consecration was wanting to Charles Coypel; he could all the more legitimately believe that he was a great painter as everybody thought as he did in this matter. His grandfather and his father had been historical painters; he received this inheritance and very cleverly took up the same brushes. The misfortune is that he was born to handle quite different ones, and his delightful compositions on *Don Quixote* show that he had all the gifts of an every-day-life painter. In the grand subjects, where he put all his efforts, he displayed no life, no emotion, and no personal view of nature. Besides, Charles Coypel painted for the drawing-rooms and boudoirs; his canvases show all their value only when enclosed in rock-work frames. Let us not displace them, for the ephemeral attraction they have exercised would risk vanishing. There remains an attraction, however, thanks to the technical skill, in his large painting, *Perseus Rescuing Andromeda,* where the nymphs around the rocks and the captive's parents constitute an expressive grouping, whilst a little Cupid, doubtless more reassured, waves his diminutive torch over all this tumult that suggests an operatic scene.

A mention is due to the *Triumph of Bacchus,* by Natoire, the best pupil formed by Francis Lemoyne, who himself has left at Versailles a splendid ceiling decoration, the *Deification of Hercules.* The master's mythology has become somewhat weakened in passing to the pupil, whose manner is perfectly characterised by this canvas. This revelry is a very mild one, in which there is an equal purity in the lines and in the intention. If this artist, who was for a long time at the head of the French Academy in Rome, ever saw in Italy the Bacchanals of Giulio Romano, those in the Té palace, for example, his well-balanced soul must have experienced a painful astonishment. The painting at the Louvre shows the extreme limit of Natoire's boldness; this triumph of the terrible god, Bacchus, is at most a triumph of academical art.

Let us now pass to the other end of the great museum, to the peaceful galleries of the pastels. A fragile and charming art there appears in the faded frames that harmonise so well with the dulle brightness of the coloured dusts. The art of pastel-drawing in the eighteenth century was entirely devoted to portrait work. More than one painter of that epoch owes to it the best of his renown—Vivien, Loir, Perronneau, Boze, Ducreux, Madame Guiard; but the immortal master of all pastelists is Maurice Quentin de la Tour. It is in the museum at Saint Quentin, his native city, that we must study La Tour. There is to be found his studio such as it was at the moment of his death, with several completed works and a large series of "his preparations." These studies, made directly from nature, show us exactly what processes he used in reproducing them. But the technical observation is here less interesting than the moral observation. This collection reveals and sums up the French soul of the century: the scepticism without stiffness of the men, and the coquettishness without folly of the women, the worship among all of pleasure, of the smile, and of the intelligence. Is it not pro-

F. Desportes.

Bonne, Nonne and Ponne, Dogs Belonging to Louis XIV.'s Pack.

digious to have stamped such subtle things upon drawing-paper, and to have fixed the most durable images of the time by the slightest crayons? It is almost fashionable nowadays to make a pilgrimage to Saint Quentin, and La Tour's studio has become a station of "psychotheraphy" for refined minds. Still, perhaps it is possible to get a taste of the master's work within the Louvre, where he is represented by twelve pastels, and by them to penetrate the secrets of an artist who had the fullest comprehension of the meaning of life.

La Tour is to be completely found in one of his principal works, the large portrait of Madame de Pompadour, the single defect of which to-day is in being too well known and in having been too highly

extolled and analysed by writers. This portrait was exhibited at the Salon of 1755, in the very middle of that feminine reign of twenty years which history hesitates to judge because it presented so many contrasts. This fascinating image enables us to understand, better than any other, the singular prestige by which it held power so long. The lady is seated beside her study table, dressed in a silver satin robe with golden vine embroideries, the bodice open and trimmed with light lilac ribbons; she is holding her music book. The head slightly turned, as though listening to an approaching step, shows the line of the neck in all its grace, and the calm of the intelligent and quiet young face stands out in relief upon the light blue background of the hangings. The whole picture reveals the tastes and occupations of a person who might be only a pretty woman and who wishes to be also an artist. The guitar of the musician lies upon an ottoman; books, and serious ones, too, present their bindings upon the table encumbered with prints; a portfolio with armorial bearings contains the work engraved

by the marchioness. Of all her portraits, this one is the most natural by the surroundings in which the artist has placed her. It is hardly probable that she gave any advice as to this choice; the capricious artist certainly made the portrait according to his own idea. The truth is that he never admitted any other rule than his own fancy, obliging the highest personages to accept all the vagaries of his character, and daring to say to the favourite when the King entered the room during his work: "You promised me, Madame, that your door would be closed!" The woman who had posed before so many skilful revealers of beauty, Nattier, Van Loo, Drouais and Boucher, was seen by La Tour in the attitude that posterity has, by preference, considered the most natural one. Her memory, so cruelly compromised by other sides of history, can only gain by this presentment. She is here the friend of artists, who tries, without too much pretension or failure, to participate in their work; she is the indefatigable reader who, if writers only praise her a little, becomes their devoted protectress; she is the introducer of delicate arts and manufactures, the counsellor of the good workers, the one whose taste shines throughout the middle of the century, and whose name has sufficed to characterise a style, a formula, an art: the Pompadour art.

PIERRE DE NOLHAC.

C. A. Coypel.

Perseus Rescuing Andromeda.

F. Desportes.

Portrait of the Artist, by Himself.

Negative by Braun Clément & Cie

N. de Largillière.

Portrait of the Artist, his Wife and his Daughter.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

J. M. Nattier.

Mary Magdelene.

Negative by Braun, Clement & C

J. M. Nattier.

Portrait of Madame Adelaide, fourth Daughter of Louis XV.

Negative by Braun, Clément & C

J. M. Nattier.

Portrait of Mademoiselle de Lambesc and her young brother,
the Count of Brionne.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

J. B. J. Pater.

Dressing.

H. Rigaud.

Portrait of J. B. Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

H. Rigaud.

Portrait of J. F. P. de Créqui, Duke of Lesdiguières.

L. Tocqué.

Portrait of Maria Leczinska, Queen of France.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

J. A. Watteau.

The Embarkment for Cythera.

J. A. Watteau.

Gille.

THE

GREAT MASTERS

IN THE

LOUVRE GALLERY

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

FIRST VOLUME

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N. Poussin.

Eliezer and Rebecca.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

THE French School of the seventeenth century, which is, perhaps, the one that is the least appreciated in our own country at the present moment, represents, nevertheless, in the highest degree the tendencies, turn of mind and predominant qualities of our race ; it recalls, too, one of the most brilliant and refined periods of our history. It is for these various reasons, as well as for the disdain shown to this school, that I have accepted, not to say mildly solicited, the perilous honour of speaking about it, without, however, concealing from myself how difficult it is to do so worthily.

The frequentation of the galleries at the Louvre where the French masters of the seventeenth century are collected, and almost exiled, would be an excellent discipline and a healthy regimen for the mind, especially at our epoch, so tormented by divers tendencies, many of which are foreign to our genius. Visitors would learn from Poussin, dignity, truthfulness and style, gathered in the meditation of nature ; from Claude Lorraine, the value of light in its soundest and most vivifying qualities ; from the Le Nains, simplicity and the attention given to the humblest beings, as well as to all that is human and touching in the most vegetative life ; from Le Sueur, chastity, gentleness and the spirit of sacrifice ; from Le Brun, on the contrary, magnificence and the grand disposing and arranging of spectacular fêtes; from Philip of Champaigne, cultivated reason and modesty in strength of soul; from all of these artists, clearness, logic and accuracy.

Even those artists that to-day seem to us affected, academical or conventional, such as Vouet, Mignard and Jouvenet, offer us, when we know how to see and understand them, profitable lessons and real beauties. Unfortunately, the too great mobility of our tastes and infatuations, the ease we show in being satisfied with our defects and in not being proud of our genuine qualities, the slight appreciation we have of our great men, are the reasons why the public does not linger in these galleries. We wish, that after having made the review with us, the reader would feel the desire to study and honour these splendid painters, and that our artists would recognise in them their veritable family.

In a general manner, the feature that strikes us first of all in the larger part of the French School of the seventeenth century is the Italian influence, which is clearly, and even too clearly, shown, sometimes in the works of the greatest masters. Let us be more explicit : it is a certain influence, and not the best, among those to which they might have been subjected. The Primitives and the fifteenth century masters are unknown, or, what is still worse, considered as barbarians. Whatever respect may be professed for Michael Angelo or Raphael, it is not positive that minds are not still more haunted by Sebastiano del Piombo and Giulio Romano. To these admirations, others still nearer are preferred : those of Guido, Domenichino and the Carraccis. It is they who are considered as the really great men, if the others are honoured as gods. Now, the tendency in art is to imitate the great men, or those who are reputed as such, rather than the too august divinities. The masters who were thus voluntarily accepted belonged to the Italian decadence, whilst France herself was in full maturity. The finished qualities of the great French artists of the seventeenth century are, therefore, more than once imbued with formulas peculiar to a decadent period. But what does that matter ? Of what consequence are the preoccupations and influences when the works are beautiful in their entirety ? Those who know and ardently love the French art of the Middle Ages regret none the less that our school, from the beginning of the sixteenth century, should have taken this direction. Still, it would be unjust to see only the influence and ignore the genius.

Simon Vouet and his followers open the seventeenth century properly speaking, and succeed without interruption to the Fontainebleau School, the last representatives of which were Ambroise Dubois and Martin Freminet, who still lived during the first years of the century. The Italian painters came to France in the sixteenth century; in the seventeenth, the French painters considered it as a duty, an instruction and a consecration to go to Italy, and Simon Vouet was one of the first travellers. He even made a long sojourn away from France ; starting off in 1611, at the age of twenty-one years, he returned only in 1627, after having visited or inhabited Constantinople, Venice, Genoa and Rome. His education was above all Venetian and Roman, for he studied and copied the works of Titian and Paul Veronese, then those of Caravaggio, and lastly those of Guido Reni. From all these studies he created a composite manner, but one that approached Guido Reni rather than the great Venetians.

Quite sure of himself, very learned, without emotion felt or communicated, Vouet was a sufficiently accurate and elegant decorator, and his colour is clear and gay. Lively blues, frank yellows, reds more brilliant than refined, render his harmonies recognisable at a distance, the same as a certain type of woman with a round face, vermilion mouth, straight little nose and widely-opened eyes at once gives a signature to his paintings. Most of the time we find, either as a pure portrait or as a reminiscence, the features of his wife, the beautiful Virginia da Vezzo Velletrano, whom he married at Rome and who herself was an artist.

The Louvre possesses a very characteristic sample of Vouet's manner, the full-length *Portrait of Louis XIII.*, wearing a cuirass and accompanied by two allegorical figures symbolising France

S. Vouet.

Portrait of Louis XIII.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

and Navarre. This picture, which is interesting in itself and decorative, has, besides, an accessory interest somewhat amusing : it is the portrait of the pupil by the master. Louis XIII. prided himself a little on being a painter, and Simon Vouet, as a clever courtier, had, according to the chronicles of the time, "taught him to use pastel so as exactly and rapidly to catch a resemblance." Simon Vouet is the type of the painter who is in favour at Court, leading an existence of grand seignior, reaching the point of not being able to fulfil his orders and giving them out for execution by his numerous pupils. But the paintings that the Louvre possesses are by his hand, and furnish a good idea of his noble, elegant and skilful manner. Those that most merit the visitor's attention are the allegory of *Riches*, in the seventeenth century gallery, and *Susanna*, in the Lacaze collection. Vouet's artistic influence was not less important than his social position, and this is one of the reasons why we have dwelt a little upon this master. It is sufficient to say that he had as pupils Le Brun, Mignard and Le Sueur, then Louis Testelin, Tortebat, Dorigny, Francis Perrier, Michael Corneille, Aubin and Claude Vouet, his two brothers, and others, even to the great layer-out of royal gardens, to the pre-eminent gardener of the seventeenth century, Le Nôtre !

Before examining the works of Vouet's most illustrious pupils, the historical order, not to speak of our own impatience to run at once to the greatest among the French masters, requires that we should immediately occupy ourselves with Poussin, even though it should diminish our pleasure with the others.

Nicolas Poussin is not only the greatest of French painters, the one with whom we feel the most in safety, and who awakens in us the grandest and most human thoughts; he is also one of the greatest artists of all times and one of the most illustrious geniuses of humanity. With him truth and poetry are on the same high plain and serenely exalt each other. He observes and invents. He is a great man, to whom nothing that is human is strange, and he is a dreamer who is elated by nature without being able to separate man from it.

Very successful works of painting often give at once the pleasure they are capable of procuring; they say nothing more after the first glance. With Poussin, the more one of his pictures is examined the more new beauties of design, composition and thought are discovered. A work by

him cannot be quickly regarded nor superficially appreciated; there is not a scene among the important series owned by the Louvre which, to be simply understood in its entirety and comprehended in its principal details, does not require at least a few moments' examination. And yet, they are small in size, and it is a well-known fact that our eye perceives and our mind takes in rapidly the most enormous images, the largest and most peopled pictures. This observation has its importance, especially in our day, when the annual exhibitions have established the fashion, vainly resisted, of immense and empty works. Poussin, like all superior thinkers, says the greatest number of things, and the most profound, with the most sober means, and is intense with simplicity.

It would not be possible in this article to thoroughly study Poussin's character and career; such a task would require more than a hundred pages; and his own correspondence, where not a line ought to be neglected, forms a large volume. We will at least try to summarise the principal features of his life and mind, and some remarks upon the important paintings in the national museum will serve to complete and elucidate this abridgment.

Poussin led a hard and agitated existence up to his ripe age. He experienced extreme misery, neglect, denials of justice—in short, everything that renders bitter to a man of genius the daily bread so painfully earned, and everything that strengthens without hardening the character of a man when he is, like Poussin, noble and good. Admirable in struggle and adversity, Poussin was no less perfect after glory arrived. When his peaceful existence at Rome began, when powerful protectors came to him and the admiration of the civilised world surrounded him, he remained modest, simple and full of kindness. His work is that of a man who had strong trials and surmounted them all. If he had a profound knowledge of the human heart, a broad and true philosophy at the same time, that is to say indulgent and not dupable, he owed it to his experience of life; if, on the other hand, his work is impregnated with serenity and an incomparable force; if, in a word, he is the greatest poet among all our painters, it is the victorious testimony of his gifts.

The only masters that Poussin had have become entirely obscure for us: Quantin Varin, Ferdinand Elle, l'Allemand; or, rather, he had scarcely any master but himself and also Raphael and Giulio Romano, whose works he studied through engraved reproductions. He came to Paris when he was eighteen years old; at twenty he was obliged by ill-health to return to Les Andelys. He started for Rome twice, but was forced to turn back both times on account of poverty and malady. We must here mention as a very important fact for our study of the seventeenth century, that between these two journeys he became acquainted with Philip of Champaigne. Poussin was finally able to reach Rome and, thanks to powerful friends, begin the realisation of his dream; but immediately afterwards he lost these protectors, and misfortune again overtook him. This, however, did not prevent him from leading the most ardent and noble artistic existence until a serious illness came near costing him his life; his restoration to health and a happier state followed closely upon his misery and despair. He was taken in and cared for by one of his compatriots, James Dughet, whose daughter he married as well as adopting the sons. Then his glory burst forth after more than fifteen years of struggle and misfortune. He not only had high protectors in Italy, but was ordered to present himself at the Court of Louis XIII. There they seemed to expect everything of him; he was obliged to decorate churches, palaces, the Louvre; finally, at the end of two years he had had enough of the intrigues formed against him, and seized the first opportunity to return to Rome, which he was no longer to quit and where, from the Pincian Hill, his mind embraced so many centuries of art, such a long and prodigious history, which became enlarged year by year with his talent. Such, in a few words, was Poussin's life.

N. Poussin.
The Judgment of Solomon.

If, as a painter, he was necessarily more in direct contact with the works of Raphael, Giulio Romano, Guido Reni and Domenicho Zampieri, as an artist he always remained more deeply in communication with antiquity. His work is imbued with the whole of antiquity. It is Phidias who guides his hand in design and modelling, and Virgil who directs his mind towards the profound love of nature and revery in broad landscapes.

With Poussin the perfect form is as inseparable from the immense outline of the fields, waters and woods as it is from the thought itself. Thought, form and nature constitute the harmonious trilogy that reigns from one end to the other of his work and is found in each picture with different shades, but with a unique aim. This aim is the expression of beauty, either physical or moral, by the arrangement of lines and the harmony of colours. Thus, each subject, according to its execution and com-

position, varies in a surprising manner. Poussin's work and genius are stamped everywhere, but his inspiration is multiple; a picture by him is always recognisable although always different. Sometimes it is the human drama that predominates, as in the *Rape of the Sabines*, in the *Philistines Struck with the Plague*, in the *Adulteress*, in *Eliezer and Rebecca*, in the *Blind Men of Jericho* and in the *Death of Sapphira;* then, the landscape of country or city is only the accompaniment of the episode represented, yet still, it is always lovely and rational. Sometimes, on the contrary, it is the sensation of nature that takes possession of the artist's mind, and then the human figure moves between the two immensities of heaven and earth without our ceasing to be interested in its action and its passions; for example, the four landscapes made for Richelieu, that are among the master's most celebrated works: *The Earthly Paradise*, *Ruth and Boaz*, the *Bunch of Grapes from Canaan*, *The*

Great Flood, or still more so in *Diogenes* and *Orpheus and Eurydice*. Finally, it also happens that in his work, nature and man are narrowly united in an equal proportion, nature becoming rather an accompaniment than an outline, and man no longer taking part in a particular dramatic action; for instance, *The Triumph of Flora*, the touching unfinished *Apollo in Love with Daphne,* and the various *Bacchanals*. We ought, also, to analyse in a special manner his decorative works, the ceiling *Time and Truth, Saint Paul's Ecstacy*, and the immense canvases, very rare in Poussin's work, with figures as large as life or larger, such as the *Appearance of the Virgin to Saint James Major, Jesus Instituting the Eucharist,* and the *Miracle of Saint Francis Xavier*.

The *Rape of the Sabines*, which is, perhaps, one of the finest types of the historical drama in Poussin's painting, is, at the same time, an astonishing illustration of will in a work of art. A scene of unexampled violence and barbarity is expressed by the most detailed and analytical means, which, executed by any other artist, would be unbearably cold. What painter would not have been tempted to give way to a more or less artificial passion? But Poussin, like Corneille or Racine, possessed too dominating a mind not to seek to render the greatest disorder and most frightful confusion by the voluntarily logical order of words or lines, phrases or groups. This is what is properly called *style*, and such as it has been defined by one of our great classical writers: "The order and movement that a person gives to his thoughts." For this reason, as we said at the beginning, Poussin, like most of the masters of the seventeenth century, can be an eternal source of instruction and regeneration for French art.

Certainly, we have the right to say that Poussin is a great poet, but we ought to be more positive: he is a poet who never uses literary elements for the beginning or the establishing of the foundation of his work, but employs purely plastic elements. It is for this reason that everything holds together in his paintings and that some beauties of sentiment appear in addition; there are never any gaps or uncertainties in the construction.

As for the colouring, it enables us to measure with what suppleness the modes vary (in a musical sense) according to the nature of the subjects. In the *Sabines* the colour is clear, metallic and a little forbidding. In the *Philistines Struck with the Plague*, another picture that might admit of the same general observations, it is brownish, ardent and as though pestilential itself. In *Orpheus and Eurydice*, on the contrary, it is soft, silvery, of the most extreme freshness, and lends itself to some incomparable niceties and delicacies of execution. *Spring* and *Diogenes* are also composed of light harmonies that cannot fail to suggest a luminous and peaceful joy; whilst in *The Great Flood* rarely have more tragical and dismal accords been used in painting with notes as sober and closely united; or again, in *The Triumph of Flora*, where the most generous and opulent tones serve, with a rich and ample execution, to celebrate the enthusiasm of air, earth and beings.

Poussin's philosophy is not less worthy of attention than his technical skill and poetic inspiration. In the *Shepherds in Arcadia*, about which it is dangerous to write at length for fear of repeating commonplaces, an entire human experience exhales itself in the melancholy epitaph: ET IN ARCADIA EGO! The beings disappear one by one, but the being remains in the midst of the incessant renewal of nature. In the groups of young girls in *Eliezer and Rebecca*, it is a pleasure to study the delicate malice of a profound observer who does not neglect the most vehement passions of man any more than the most delicate shades of sentiment in young girls, from artless confidence and free admiration to the jealousy that suddenly renders the complexion pale and changes the features. Each one of these figures is, as in so many of the master's pictures, an antique statue, admirably constructed and draped, but also a being who lives, thinks and feels, and all this is united to a conception of art that is absolutely modern. Moreover, Delacroix, writing upon Poussin, has he not

Claude Gellée, called Claude Lorraine.

A Sea-port at Sunset.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

said in the truest and most striking manner, that his work (he adds that of Le Sueur, which it is important to note in passing) "is an ardent protest against the conventionalisms of a school?" Did he not proclaim that we should consider Poussin as "an innovator of the rarest kind?" We should observe, also, how Poussin comprehended and treated the figure of Christ, especially in two of his celebrated works, the *Blind Men of Jericho* and the *Adulteress*. We are accustomed to recommend above all the study of these two heads to those who wish to understand something of our painter's soul; they are, so to speak, a key. The first is simply full of manly grace and a tender and grave compassion; the other is characterised not only by indulgence and pity, but also by a subtle and

inexpressible irony. At the same time, Poussin, emphasizing in this scene—which is one of the most profound he ever conceived—the very diverse and curious kinds of ugliness of the pitiless accusers of the adulterous woman, has unquestionably created a satirical work and frankly told a part of society what he thought about them. It is very interesting to mention that this picture was painted in 1655 for Le Nôtre, who was not only a great artist, but also a very good man.

In other circumstances Poussin might already be considered as having expressed his sentiment upon human unkindness; but in *Time Shielding Truth from the Attacks of Envy and Discord*, he spoke in his own cause. This painting was executed for Cardinal Richelieu in 1641, and if we recall that it was in this year that he not only received marks of favour from Louis XIII., but was at the same time the object of the most furious intrigues on the part of Vouet and especially of the painter Feuquières and the architect Le Mercier, it might be supposed with a good show of reason

that this allegory, which is represented with so much dignity, energetic expression and grandeur of design, was nothing else than a noble and serene vengeance.

We have now mentioned and briefly noted in their essential features the most celebrated of the forty Poussins possessed by the Louvre; but there are many others to study, of which we have said little or nothing. It would have been necessary to show the complete poem of the Seasons in the paintings executed for the Duke of Richelieu. We have called attention to the atmosphere that reigns in *The Earthly Paradise* and *The Great Flood;* but the abundant richness of the *Bunch of Grapes!* the indefinable harmony of the harvests and hills in *Ruth and Boaz!* It would have been requisite to speak of the terror of the *Death of Sapphira,* the warlike tumult of *Pyrrhus Saved,* the thrusting and struggling in the *Israelites Gathering Manna,* the steadfast majesty of the *Judgment of Solomon;* the beauty of the landscape, the variety of positions, the spirit of primitive religion, in *Saint John Baptizing the People,* the powerful animation in *Camillus Giving up the Falisca School-Master to his Pupils;* the admirable biblical idyls of the two episodes of *Moses Rescued from the Waters,* the two *Holy Families,* the not less admirable pagan and voluptuous idyls of the small *Bacchanals, Mars and Venus, Mars and Rhea Sylvia, Echo and Narcissus,* this last one so full of anxiety and heart-rending melancholy. But in naming these we should not have mentioned all, and something would still remain to be said about this august French master, who, in the last two years of his life, wrote these words, which describe him completely: "In growing old I feel more than ever inflamed with the desire to surpass myself and attain the highest perfection."

What a dream to imagine the walks and talks of Poussin in the outskirts of Rome, sometimes in company with his sublime and instinctive neighbour, compatriot and friend, Claude Lorraine! It is to this artist that we are now obliged to pass, without other transition than that of facts. The two existences were contemporaneous, and the two careers offer a certain parallel: Poussin lived from 1594 to 1665, Claude Gellée from 1600 to 1682. Claude, like Poussin, experienced all sorts of tribulation and misery during the first part of his course; like Poussin, it was to Italy that he returned with persistency, and there found at last peace, inspired labour and glory. Finally, Claude Gellée, who was a great artist, an excellent man, but illiterate and perhaps even of an obscure intelligence, according to some witnesses, was drawn into the orbit of the strong and lucid mind of Poussin, who was always surrounded by the profound attention and veneration of the small French artistic colony at Rome, and this exercised an influence over him.

After all, in the absence of these historical comparisons, there would still be an artistic similitude forcing itself upon our attention. Although to a lesser degree than Poussin, Claude Lorraine is an inventor. Poussin has introduced into art a quantity of new ideas founded upon eternal truths; Claude Lorraine made known new resources based upon a free interpretation of natural scenes. He had the faculty of seeing what others did not appear to have perceived before him, and what, however, is the most visible of all things: sunlight. There is no hierarchy among great artists; although Claude Lorraine's domain is more restricted, we may put him, as a painter, in a corresponding rank with Poussin.

As we have done for the first master, we will briefly summarise the important facts in Claude Lorraine's life. He was born at Chamagne, on the borders of the Moselle. His childhood was sad, obscure, wandering; left an orphan at an early age, he followed one of his brothers, who was an engraver, to Switzerland, and then went to Rome with one of his relatives who was a merchant; he became extremely destitute at Naples, turned back to Rome, and regained France by way of Venice (which fact seems to us of great importance in the evolution of his talent); he afterwards lived successively at Nancy, Lyons and Marseilles, and finally returned to Rome. During all this time,

Claude Gellée, called Claude Lorraine.

Sea-port in a Haze.

always poor, scarcely earning his living by doing perspective work or decorations for various painters, half pupil, half domestic, he reached success only towards his thirtieth year, in 1627, when he sold his first landscapes that were to render him celebrated and envied. The rest of his life was spent in labour and, in part, in suffering; for, during forty years, although continually producing, he was crippled by a malady that the doctors then called gout, but which may have been, possibly, some nervous affection. He was robbed and shamefully counterfeited; it would seem as though unprincipled persons made a fool of him and pirated his genius. Two instances will suffice to show what sort of a man he was. A pupil whom he had taken in and befriended, robbed and calumniated him and then

claimed damages; Claude paid him what he demanded, but accepted no more pupils. On another occasion, to guarantee to himself the property of ideas that had been stolen even from his easel, he established in a series of admirable drawings his *Liber Veritatis*, the first one of which has an inscription that we must cite textually, so as to give it all its relish: "On the 10th of August, 1667. This present collection belongs to me; I made it during my life. Claudio Gellée, called the Lorrain, at Rome the 23rd August, 1680." Thus, on two occasions at the close of his life, he experienced the need of affirming retrospectively what had belonged to him. All these examples of simplicity, kindness and suffering, render the physiognomy of Claude Lorraine singularly touching, and our meditations about him might give rise to many theories.

His work is radiantly represented at the Louvre, as we may well say, by sixteen paintings that

can bear comparison with the most precious ones at London, Madrid, Dresden and Florence. In these pictures, Claude Lorraine may be studied as a master not exactly of colour, but rather of light; there is a shade of difference. His colour, in fact, whilst being vivid, brilliant and bold, does not show researches and refinements such as we find at the same epoch among the Flemings or the Dutch. It is the distribution of the light which gives all its value to his colour. We cannot even declare that Claude Lorraine is a colourist in the sense in which the word is used to-day, that is to say a master of light and shade. But, to take another modern term which so perfectly applies to him that it does not appear to be a neologism, we may assert that he is pre-eminently a "luminist."

With a determination and tranquility that are not even audacious, so much do they imply self-mastery, he seizes the light boldly. He throws the sun into the very centre of his canvas and draws from it all the effects on the concentric parts of the picture. This is so logical and honest that we do not think of protesting, after a moment's reflection, against the really extraordinary act of representing the sun, which is brilliancy itself, by a small bit of coloured mud, of heavy and dull matter. Nothing could better prove that art is a transposition, where the means signify little, but where the relations are everything. It is by the relations, or values, marvellously observed, that Claude Lorraine's pictures remain unique works of art, perhaps still more perfect, which would be saying a good deal, than the sincere and subtle works of another master of sunny atmosphere, Albert Cuyp. The two temperaments, however, and, above all, the two educations, were different. Without instituting a parallel that would, nevertheless, be full of instruction, we may remark that Claude Lorraine, with his Roman education, attached a visible importance to the composition and subject, although, following the custom of the epoch, he had his landscapes "stuffed" by his brother-artists who were figure-painters. Cuyp, on the contrary, accepted nature without any arrangement, and contented himself with a corner of anonymous ground. Still, this difference is entirely external, since what we admire above all in both artists is that which it is impossible to grasp.

We have been obliged to mention that the figures in Claude Lorraine's pictures are not always by him (they are by Philippo Lauri, James Courtois, John Miel and others), but we ought also to add that this question of "stuffing" is of no consequence; without being executed by him, these personages necessarily become his, since he was obliged to retouch them and place them in unison with the general tone of the picture, to bathe them in the same silver, pale-gold or red-gold dust that rests upon and impregnates the palaces, trees and waves. Finally, if Claude obediently accepted the conventionalisms and factitious pomps required in his day, free to satisfy himself by the execution and the light, we must equally remark that he designed his decoration and established his horizons with a simplicity that is not often found among the painters of his time. Notwithstanding the richness of the accumulation of palaces and the swarmings of the foregrounds, what always predominates are the splendid, smooth and simple lines, the magnificent proportions of the sky and the scene.

As an illustration of this we will mention three of the paintings at the Louvre, which are the most perfect specimens. They show the grandeur of the composition, the simple and mysterious beauty of the line where sky and sea rejoin each other, and, in addition, three distinct types of solar light. In the *Landing of Cleopatra at Tarsus*, the sun is clear and temperate; in *Ulysses Restoring Chryseis to her Father*, the sky is already ardent and all aglow; in a *Sea-port at Sunset* (No. 313 of the present catalogue), everything is reddish, flaming, and a sheet of fire falls from the sky upon the water. We must add, although in different notes, the superb *Sea-port at Sunrise* (No. 310), where the light is astonishingly fresh and silvery, and the *Sea-port in a Haze* (No. 317), where the sun is veiled, one of the simplest and grandest of subjects. These are the works that are the most complete, and the most expressive of his manner; but there are great beauties in other pieces, especially in *David Crowned by Solo-*

E. Le Sueur.

Clio, Euterpe and Thalia.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

mon and in the *Village Fête*. The remaining pictures are remarkable in various ways, even the *Ford* (No. 322), which we can see is matchless in colour and composition under the heavy plastering called "restoration" inflicted upon it at the beginning of the century, and which might, possibly, with infinite precautions, be removed.

We see, little by little, as we said at the beginning, what great and precious lessons of dignity and

clearness can always be given by the masters of the seventeenth century, and perhaps above all, the masters of its dawn still more than those of its maturity and close. It is with the first that we ought, by spirit as well as chronologically, to associate one of the most unjustly disdained and least understood artists at the present day, Eustace Le Sueur.

There was a time when, by a very just reaction against academical art and formulas of schools which pretended to draw their inspiration from our classical masters, but which, not understanding them, according to M. Degas's pointed expression, "copied them in dishonouring them," it was judged

necessary to leave the seventeenth century aside and to take in hand the causes of the ages and works that this century itself had misunderstood and treated as barbarous. Then it was as bold as it was salutary to revise such a case, to claim places among the greatest for our artists of the Middle Ages, illuminators and image-makers, for the masters of the sixteenth century, for the Italian Primitives and the Quatrocentists, for the Byzantines, for the Japanese and the Persians. It was absolutely indispensable to overturn some childish hierarchies and to honour genius wherever it was to be found, without exclusion of races, sensations or means. But to-day the positions are conquered forever; many unwarranted reputations have returned to obscurity, and many so-called barbarians of former times are our most luminous guides. On the other hand, in taking as a pretext the marvellous liberties conquered over Europe, or since the sixteenth century, modern art has finished by going deeply into extravagance, but without solidity, and has manifested tendencies towards the very opposite of what is called academical. These tendencies consist in taking the non-realised for strength, and obscurity for originality. This is contrary to the genius of our race, and it is for this reason that we can at the present hour make, without any danger, some very fine seventeenth century reparations.

With an artist like Le Sueur we shall learn, after having overcome the first prejudices, to appreciate in art the virtues of simplicity, limpid eloquence, purity and abnegation. The seventeenth century stamped French life and society with such a strong character that most of the provinces have remained attached to the taste, spirit, language, manners and religion of that epoch. The portraits by Philip of Champaigne, of which we shall soon speak, are not only of a thoroughly pure race, but the types they reproduce have been preserved to the present day in the most striking fashion, by the features as well as by the disposition. To these serious and simple personages, punctual, sober and upright, and at the same time capable of great interior enthusiasm and great exterior courage, Le Sueur's paintings spoke and would still speak to the soul by their frugality and their clearness, by that sort of spiritual renunciation that attaches more importance to the truthfulness of the sentiment than to the refinement of form. It is thus easy to conceive that Le Sueur's painting had nothing that could fascinate delicate art-lovers, neither those who consulted fashion, nor even those who, having real culture, are taken by the luxurious, complex and contrasted sides of pictures. Le Sueur's painting, on the contrary, has neither luxury nor complexity, nor even the feeblest contrast, no more than we meet with such things in cloister life, which is poor, uniform and monotonous.

We must not forget, even in the national museum, that Le Sueur was a painter of the bare and clear churches of the seventeenth century, so little mysterious and so little severe beside those of the Middle Ages, but so propitious for the exercise of modest virtues and submissive piety; and that he was even still more than that, a painter of the cloister. Not of the Italian cloister, where everything is vermilion and caressing, where savoury fruits and splendid, perfumed flowers grow; but of the French cloister, where the stone is gray, the vegetation moderate, and the sky temperate and fine. A painting by Le Sueur would be as much out of place in a fashionable or princely drawing-room (we mean a religious painting, for we shall see how he conceived art for the rich) as a monk of La Trappe or a Carthusian Friar among the voluptuous naked shoulders, the silks and uniforms of a ball. It is already difficult at the national museum to separate their beauty from disturbing and imperious surroundings. We have often dreamed of an ideal Louvre, where each great master would have his gallery, arranged and decorated according to the spirit of his time and his own nature. The Rubenses would be lodged in the magnificence of a palace; the Dutch masters in small, intimate, varnished chambers; the Le Sueurs in the gray and uniform development of a cloister. There, no gold frames and no superfluous ornamentation. The colour touched up by the voluntary monotony of the surroundings would regain its freshness and purity of a cold flower; the mind not being troubled by accessory

The Le Nain Brothers.

The Horse Shoer.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

considerations, by frequentations of splendour and sensuality, would fully enjoy the just and exquisite sentiment, the pious sincerity of these works.

For want of this only logical presentation, let us make an effort of imagination and take delight in the paintings of the *Life of Saint Bruno*, without making comparisons or recalling souvenirs. Let us observe, at least, how each scene is made to say exactly what it is meant to say, how the attitudes and movements of each personage are accurate, simple and in conformity with the act they accomplish, the language they speak and the sentiment that animates them while they listen. From the most dramatic scenes, such as the *Death of Saint Bruno* or *Raymond Diocres Replying After his Death*, to the most peaceful ones by the truthfulness of expression, by the intensity in moderation, Le Sueur is, in the very heart of the seventeenth century, like a sort of French Giotto. We will not say anything more about this important series, for when the reader has admitted this way of seeing it he will not need any further comments; whilst, if he should not feel the same sentiment, all other demonstration would be useless.

This painter of ascetic subjects is also a painter of grace and purity. The works that best show this side of his talent are, the *Appearance of Scholastica to Saint Benedict*, and the series of mythological paintings executed for the Lambert mansion. This time, whatever may be the dispositions of taste and education, no one can remain insensible to the delicious grace that permeates this *Appearance*. It is not only a delightful composition in itself, but one of profound originality. Neither by the colour, which is as florid as it is sober, neither by the delicacy of the types of angels and the saintly woman, neither by the fulness of the drapery nor by the way the scene is put upon the canvas, does it recall Poussin in any manner. And the originality is all the more real as it does not appear, the painter having concealed his personality behind his subject with his usual modesty. As for the decorative pieces for the Lambert mansion, as well as the series for the Carthusian monastery, they naturally lose their character by the crowding, and by removal from their original place. Still, they are always of a rare elegance. The groups of the Muses have been appreciated even by the most sullen and prejudiced persons. They are so charmingly drawn and arranged, especially the laughing beauty of the trio, *Euterpe, Clio and Thalia*. If Racine, instead of writing sacred tragedies for Saint Cyr, had been requested to furnish profane poems, it is in this style that he would have written the choruses, with the same grace and moderation. Notwithstanding the

situation. Sister Catherine de Sainte Suzanna, ill with fever and paralysis for fourteen months, had been given up by the physicians. A nine day's prayer for her restoration, offered by Mother Catherine Agnes, brought about the cure of which everyone had despaired. Philip of Champaigne executed this painting in commemoration and as an action of grace. Here we have, then, presented with an astonishing sobriety, this terribly beautiful drama of three personages : the power of hope, the power of prayer, represented by the two sisters, and the power of grateful resignation, represented by this father who, having twice seen his daughter die for the world, retraces this event with a firm hand, a contained ardour and a purified inspiration. What a direful and incomparable way of manifesting his joy by the saddest serenity ! What a silent hymn ! This painting would still be unique if it retraced a simple scene of ascetic life. Without gesticulation and exaggeration, it has as much depth and intensity as the most violent Spanish paintings ; but when we know all the renunciation, piety and faith that is in this image, we are better able to appreciate how perfect is the expression of the interior life, and the hope in God alone that the painter, by a sort of miracle, also, was able to render in such strong and inconceivable traits. After that, it is almost useless, although a great artistic teaching would result, to insist upon the elevation of the design, upon the profound yet hidden knowledge shown by Philip of Champaigne in the general harmony, and in the rendering of a gray wall lighted by a ray, or of an humble straw chair, which become, as well as the book, the staff of the crucifix, the drugget robes and the rosary, elements of poignant emotion, the same as these joined hands, these admirable heads and these celestial smiles.

Here we have, then, some portraits that ought to make us better understand, as we have already said, what sort of people could best feel how simple and pure is Le Sueur's art, or, to generalise our thought, portraits that show one of the truest sides of the French race and spirit, so much misunderstood and calumniated. We should add that among the portraits by Philip of Champaigne at the Louvre are those of Arnauld of Andilly, of a man dressed in black, reading, the double portrait of Perrault and Mansard, of Philip of Champaigne himself, which is of such a proud and sober style that it is worthy of Poussin, of whom it makes us think. Finally, the magnificent *Provost of the Merchants and Aldermen of the City of Paris*, in the Lacaze collection, a precious corporation picture that will only be eclipsed later on in France by those of Largillière, and the stately *Portrait of Cardinal Richelieu*, of such grand air, such limpid harmony and, we must repeat, such French taste. In these energetic eyes, in which shine the flame of the mind, in these firm and loyal mouths, in the dignified and resolute bearing of these personages, we may study the whole psychology of our race, and render a rational homage to the artist that France definitely adopted. We might add to this gallery, as a fresh flower, the delicious portrait of the young girl in white upon a red ground, holding a hawk, and among so many grave and robust minds this little soul will not be out of place.

Philip of Champaigne decorated, as we have said, a number of churches and palaces. One of the best paintings by him that the Louvre has been able to obtain, is the *Lord's Supper*, coming from the Bernardin monks of the Faubourg Saint Jacques ; we may add the *Repast at Simon's House*, a very large work executed by order of Anne of Austria for the Val de Grace monastery. Here, Philip recalls Poussin, without, however, being equal to him.

The seventeenth century, which it is the custom to consider as exclusively pompous, factitious and liking in art only the grandiloquent (we shall see with some of the masters which remain to be studied that this opinion is not wholly wrong), possessed also its observers of nature such as it is, and its truth-tellers ; we have had, and shall still have, the proof of this. The Le Nain brothers are in the front rank of these sincere historians. They are great, very great artists, and merit to be more highly honoured than they are in France. One of the reasons of their greatness, according to our belief, is,

J. Jouvenet.

Portrait of Fagon, Physician to Louis XIV.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

that while remaining life-like and true, they are never declamatory or coarse. To make ourselves better understood by modern terms, they are neither "humanitarians" nor "realists;" and yet, they have painted the lowly with a firmness and accuracy that are striking after more than three centuries.

Their lives are obscure, and the division of their work remains enigmatical. Still, perhaps the impossibility of making this division has been exaggerated. There exist very clear texts, and an attentive examination of the pictures may render certain deductions very probable. Let us reduce the debate to its simplest expression. The dates of the births are mere conjectures. Antony is said to have been born in 1588, Louis in 1593, and Matthew in 1600. As for their deaths, it is known that Antony and Louis died in 1648, and Matthew in 1677. All three were born at Laon and received lessons from "a foreign artist who taught them the first elements of painting." On this point there is no doubt. Laon is near Flanders, and the technical education of our painters is visibly Flemish, without, however, in any way changing their temperament, which is thoroughly French. We know by the same document (a manuscript by the monk Dom Grenier) that Antony "excelled in the miniature and in short portraits, and Louis in half-lengths." About Matthew, nothing decisive is said as to a specialty, but he is sufficiently distinguished from the two others by what is said of each one of them.

Let us now examine some of their principal pictures that are at the Louvre; it is evident that they all have a very pronounced "family air," but differences of temperament are not less noticeable. For example, the *Portrait of Henry II. of Montmorency*, in a white doublet with its beautiful lace collar, is certainly not by the same hand as the *Repast of Peasants*, in the Lacaze collection. It is not at all unreasonable to attribute this portrait to Louis, to the one who made a specialty of "half-lengths." We will say, in passing, that for its technical skill, and for other reasons which it would be too long to develop here, we are inclined to ascribe to Louis Le Nain the remarkable picture, a *Rhetoric Chamber*, numbered 2,642 and classified at the Louvre in the Dutch School. It was Champfleury's opinion, and we are absolutely of the same way of thinking. When we examine the *Horse Shoer*, the *Repast of Peasants* and the simple and touching *Returning from Haymaking*, which is in the seventeenth century gallery, we at once see that these pictures are conceived and executed in a different manner

from the *Procession in a Church* and the two *Portraits in an Interior*, catalogued 543, 544 A. The artist who painted the first ones proceeded by very simple harmonies and closely-united values; an almost exclusively light-gray accord in *Returning from Haymaking*, a light brown in the *Repast of Peasants*, and red and brown in the *Horse Shoer*. Moreover, his handling of the subject is very sober, although skilful and without any research of richness. I will not speak of the difference of character, although this painter is evidently more generalising and more philosophic, but confine myself to purely technical reasons. The painter of the *Procession* and the pictures numbered 543 and 544 A seeks, on the contrary, all the richness of the impasto, the liveliness of the oppositions of colour, bright reds, strong blues; his execution is more careful and at the same time more in contrast. Finally, the physiognomies of the personages are very minutely studied and particularised, that is to say they are more really portraits than the peasants or the shoers of the other painter. Everything, even to the nature of the process used, makes us think of this Antony Le Nain who "excelled in the *miniature* and in *short portraits*," or, works of small dimensions, a double definition that applies with striking force to the personages of the *Portraits in an Interior* and to the prelates in the *Procession*. The painter of the peasants would thus be Matthew Le Nain. As for the religious pieces, the *Nativity* (No. 539), *Peter's Denial*, and the works we see in the different Paris churches, they may have been done by the three brothers together. But let us not spoil by too much precision what is perfectly precise in our preceding deduction.

Without further analysis, here are the admirable pictures that are entitled the *Repast of Peasants* and *Returning from Haymaking*, this last one much less celebrated, smaller, more rarely quoted, but which is, all the same, touching and impressive for whoever loves and is warmed by the actions and life of humble humanity. This painter knew how to feel and express the growing greatness of the anonymous human being, of the one who has no history. He saw and reproduced with a simplicity that we do not find even in the best works of the Dutch masters (I should like to cry this aloud!) the serious side of instinctive actions. What, later on, our great Millet will seek with a slightly systematic spirit, Matthew Le Nain has realised with so little pretension that his contemporaries considered him, as well as one or the other of his brothers, merely as a painter of pictures of low life, or "bambochades," according to the term used in their day. And he was, at the same time, a perfect painter, for, a crust of bread, a pitcher, a glass of wine, a piece of linen or a garment in the *Repast* of the Lacaze collection are as much more marvellous bits as no skill in execution draws attention to them to the detriment of the general modelling of the picture or of the dominating sentiment of the scene. Again, in *Returning from Haymaking* there are simplifications and free touches which prove that without the least effort this master possessed all the qualities of competence that our epoch has so laboriously sought. The *Horse Shoer*, by the correctness of attitudes, the truthfulness of expressions, the skilful cast of the composition, by the penetrating accent of intimity, is also a masterpiece of the same quality and signification. All we have said does not diminish the value of the pictures of the charming and savoury "painter of short portraits." Certainly not. The other one painted "types," this one only "personages;" but he did so with such intelligence, such sense of individual life and valour, that his paintings remain among the very precious ones in our French School. May the spirit of the three brothers pardon us if we have made some confusion in their names and works; coined or in a single bar, the work of the Le Nains, in however limited a quantity it has come down to us, is one of the most considerable in the art of the seventeenth century and in all French art.

This truthfulness, this reflection in face of nature, this just and measured observation of the individual that we believe to be so rare in the seventeenth century school—the most diverse painters, even the most factitious and the most pretentious, had, nevertheless, these qualities in their time; but it is difficult to make what is genuine understood in the midst of appearances and against prejudices! Rigaud

C. Le Brun.

Sleep of the Child Jesus.

and Largillière do not come within the limits of this study. Although Rigaud was pre-eminently the portrait-painter of Louis XIV., and Largillière the portrayer of Le Brun, that is to say of the Louis XIV. of painting, all the second part of their career belongs to the eighteenth century. But, in the absence of these two masters, we shall be able to glean among the portrait-painters of the seventeenth century more than one interesting human document.

Sebastian Bourdon, for example (1619-1671), who was one of the most eclectic painters of his epoch, and who tried all kinds, history, religion, landscape and every-day-life, without even getting above an honourable level, traced one day the *Portrait of Descartes*, and thus gave us very nearly what may be called a masterpiece; or, at all events, a remarkable French document, a contribution to

the history of the race, and a work that can bear comparison in interest and beauty with some of the portraits of Philip of Champaigne.

Here is another example: Jouvenet (1644-1717), possessing a strong artistic temperament, but in his finest pieces, the *Descent from the Cross*, *The Miraculous Draught* and the *Raising of Lazarus*, rather an academical painter, made, without giving to it the same importance as to these vast compositions, a *Portrait of Fagon, Physician to Louis XIV.*, and this is for us an extremely curious and energetic work. A strange head is the worn, tanned head of a scholar and pedant, half scholar, half Diafoirus; not antipathetical, and yet not attractive, with his square face and questioning eyes. This is one of the rare portraits without a wig that has reached us from the seventeenth

century, and is, on the whole, a very good painting. (To tell the truth, Fagon wears a wig, a very grave and neglected peruke, but no one notices it.) Besides, clearness and vivacity were not wanting in Jouvenet, and his brilliant *High Altar at Notre Dame* may still be regarded with great pleasure.

The *Portrait of a Master and his Pupil,* by Claude Lefebvre (1632-1675), still more so than the *Descartes* by Bourdon, might be placed in the same rank as the *Arnauld of Andilly,* by Philip of Champaigne, or as his unknown reader. It is also a masterpiece that is slightly appreciated in France. This double image tells us so much about our race and in such a pictorial, simple, nervous and strong manner! We seem to see revived, personified in two excellent types—one rudely, severely intelligent; the other full of youthful and graceful attention—all the ancient French education, which contributed to render perfect the robust attention of the masters and the respectful confidence of the pupils. The two personages are clothed in black, but the simplicity of their dress and bearing does not conceal the profound distinction, the character and the intelligence. Claude Lefebvre was as highly esteemed as Van Dyck in England, where he remained for some time. How does it happen that we have so few indications about his life and work? How is it that even his work is so little known? He has, however, two distinguished sponsors, his two masters, Le Sueur and Le Brun, especially the latter, who highly appreciated his excellence. But our carelessness concerning our finest masters once more conspires with the disdain of history. The Louvre has only one other portrait by Lefebvre, that of a man, equally of proud bearing and living expression.

Great importance should also be given to the *Portrait of Peter Puget,* by his son Francis, a work of rare zest, that is doubly precious as a piece of good painting and as an effigy of a glorious artist. However, visitors do not look attentively at this effigy, which is in the gallery of portraits; they do not stop long enough to question these penetrating eyes brilliant with the flame of ardour and genius, the face of an old man upon which so much agitation and bitterness have left their traces. Such a portrait, to which the narrow ties between the author and the model give a unique and priceless guarantee of resemblance, has not its like in the art of the seventeenth century. Portrait "without wig" still more than that of Fagon, it has a modern accent; and, besides, is not Peter Puget a mind of our own time? *A Gathering of Musicians,* by Francis Puget, more arranged and more conventional, inclines us to the belief, even at the Louvre, that the portrait of his father is an exception in his work.

Of the *Portrait of Madame Elizabeth Cheron,* who was a member of the Academy in 1672, we cannot say much more than that the model is charming.

We will not speak of the large *Portrait of Louis XIV.,* by Rigaud, which is dated 1701, but simply recall his superb *Portrait of Bossuet,* which was made in 1699. We have, moreover, another portrait of Louis XIV., represented much younger, in the somewhat plain costume of a Swiss Guard, black with pink trimmings, which is a very good specimen of the seventeenth century work, but unfortunately anonymous. And we have also *Madame de Maintenon,* by Mignard. To have the character of this fine portrait fully appreciated by the reader, I cannot do better than quote this extract from the life of Mignard by the Abbot of Monville: "One of Mignard's last works was the portrait of Madame de Maintenon, who could no longer refuse this act of kindness towards her family and the Saint Cyr community. She is represented as Sainte Frances (who would suspect it?)—this parenthesis is not by the Abbot of Monville—a Roman lady whose name she bears. The painter, who had seen her in her youth, was able to recall the charms without changing the character of the age she then had. The costume is a dark-blue velvet cloak, strewn with small golden flowers, lined with ermine and attached upon the shoulder by a large diamond; the under-dress is a brown gold brocade." Everything in this description charms and amuses us, for we are here in quite a different art and air

C. Le Brun.

The Crucifix with the Angels.

from those that have thus far been the object of our admiration. Without noticing it, we have reached *the other seventeenth century,* the one which is not very simple, which is more theatrical than really great, but which is still magnificent. Everything that is essential in this art is so unconsciously well indicated in this quotation : the importance of the stuffs and trimmings, the respectful liberty taken with nature in painting the model not as she is but as she loved best to be !

It was, besides, a time when the painters themselves would not have known how to retrace their own image other than as statesmen, or at least archeologists, in some study full of books, parchments, half-unrolled plans, scientific instruments and antique models. Mignard did not make an exception to this custom and ceremony in the very fine portrait where he has represented himself at full length in a rich morning-dress. It is interesting to return to our starting point and to recall at the Louvre the sedate portrait of Poussin, by himself, this portrait that gave him so much trouble to paint, that had so disheartened him, and that he finally finished only out of friendship for M. de Chantelou. Largillière has represented with a no less pompous finery than his rival, Mignard, the imperious Le Brun ; there is the same luxurious interior, the same silk and velvet undress, the same surroundings and the same anxious brow of a man weighted with the secrets of the kingdom ! How charming and significant all this comedy of greatness for us who watch the spectacle !

It was inevitable that, in speaking of Mignard, Le Brun's name should come at the end of our pen. These two grand seigniors of painting were furious rivals, whose tenacious competition would have been worth recounting by Saint Simon. They follow each other closely, (Mignard, 1610-1695) ; Le Brun, 1619-1690), struggling slyly by intrigue and nobly by masterpieces; Le Brun was patronised

by Colbert, and Mignard by Louvois; Le Brun decorated the large gallery at Versailles, and Mignard the dome of Val de Grace; Le Brun was in high favour with Louis XIV.; Mignard painted the *Grand Dauphin and his Family*, one of his most important works; Le Brun was Director of the Royal Academy; Mignard, not wanting to be behind him, became Director of the Academy of Saint Luke; Le Brun died and Mignard succeeded him as first painter to the King, and then was a candidate for the Academy, which, in a single sitting, conferred upon him all the titles of his late rival.

However, if death gave Mignard the last word in this singular struggle, it does not prevent Le Brun from appearing as the greater figure. Surely, Mignard does not merit the contempt into which his work has fallen. He was a rich and superior painter in the material sense of the word, if otherwise he was often a mincing and affected artist. But he was a Court painter, working to please, embellishing portraits and arranging religion according to the taste of society. We are here in quite another atmosphere from that of Philip of Champaigne, Le Sueur and Poussin, and we should certainly not think of doing them the injury of making a comparison; but if such artists represent the grandeur of an epoch, painters like Mignard represent the curious, characteristic, theatrical and anecdotal side. It is more amusing to study them, provided we do not dwell upon them, than to judge them rapidly without knowing them. We have seen Mignard as a fine portrait-painter with his own effigy and that of Madame de Maintenon. We should add the large portrait of the Grand Dauphin and his family, which is a brilliant and rich picture, and of which Saint Simon's celebrated description may be a commentary or a rectification: "Rather tall than short, very stout but without being compressed; a beautiful blond; the face full and very red with heat, but without any expression; the finest limbs in the world, the feet singularly small and thin; without vice or virtue, without intelligence or knowledge, and radically incapable of acquiring any; very lazy, without imagination or the power of production; without taste, choice or discernment; born for weariness, which he communicated to others." What a reverse of a flattering image!

At the Louvre the rivalry of Mignard and Le Brun is shown in the most curious fashion by the neighbourhood of the two *Calvaries,* of the same size, of similar composition and, we may say, of an equal absence of emotion, for us at least. For that matter, Mignard appears to us slightly languid and sickly with the beautiful persons whom he has baptised *Virgin with the Grapes*, or *Sainte Cecilia;* the devotion and religious manner of Le Brun, although showing a little more strength and beauty of style, are scarcely less theatrical. *Christ Attended by the Angels,* or *The Crucifix with the Angels*, or better still the *Dead Christ* upon the Virgin's lap, are certainly fine paintings, skilfully modelled and of a sufficiently doleful harmony. But in all of them the souvenir of the masters stifles the spontaneity, the academician's bearing is demonstrated by principles, and substitutes itself for real superior qualities. There is no simplicity in these pieces, even in the most important ones; and, in addition, we must study them closely in order merely to gather the teachings of a clever and sure technical dexterity the traditions of which are to-day far remote. Moreover, Le Brun's work does not exclusively consist in his paintings.

It will be remembered that he was a sort of viceroy of the arts, of an extraordinary activity, contributing more than any other person to the incomparable ostentation that surrounded Louis XIV., especially at Versailles. He directed squads of clever artists with the decision of a General, designed in the morning a foliage or a door-knob, and in the afternoon retraced the battles of Alexander on immense canvases. From the *Christ Raised on the Cross* (No. 255), which it is interesting to signal as having began his favour at Court, to the vast, painted flatteries, very rich in colour and movement, (to rightly estimate them we must not forget that they were *tapestry cartoons* and not definite works of art) this artist's career was prodigiously occupied. Judged by this standard alone,

Philip of Champaigne.

Portrait of an Unknown Woman.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

Le Brun would be a man worth studying and admiring in this great school of the seventeenth century.

Among those who considered it an honour to work under his orders or under his patronage, we believe we may class Van der Meulen. Certainly, this artist is a Flemish painter by birth and education; but his career, like that of Philip of Champaigne, was thoroughly French. He always worked in France and for France, following Louis XIV. in all his campaigns, multiplying those superb official documents where the painter's talent is so great that tactics cease to be arid. They are magnificent, peopled landscapes in which the battles seem like ballets or processions. Van der Meulen also had titles equivalent to naturalisation: he was academician and counsellor, and was buried with great pomp at Saint Hippolytus.

We have now enumerated the most characteristic works of the French School of the seventeenth century; but we are far from having exhausted the list of masters. We have been obliged to give all our attention to the profoundest or highest figures, and to sacrifice others who are not without interest.

It is undeniable that beside the grand and accurate battle-scenes of Van der Meulen, the small, smoky and fantastical combats, very artistic, nevertheless, of James Courtois, the Burgundian, arrest the attention for a shorter time; that the agreeable La Fosse (1636-1716) cuts a smaller figure than Mignard, at least at the Louvre, for the dome of the Invalides rivals that of Val de Grace; that Laurent de La Hyre, although a skilful painter, has not the same charm and depth as Le Sueur, even in the adequately dramatic picture of *Nicholas V. at the Tomb of Saint Francis of Assisi;* that the landscapes by Francisque Millet, very curious ones for the epoch, cannot retain our regard after we have seen those of Poussin; finally, that Valentin's work has less range and is visibly more factitious than that of the Le Nain brothers. Still, this robust and brilliant Valentin is a singularly original figure for the epoch. His thoroughly Caravaggio vigour has occasionally, though rarely, some very French accents; but the humble, craintive and poor little figure of *Susanna* is a really touching and spontaneous creation, just as in the *Judgment of Solomon* the dead child is a superb bit of painting.

Finally, although we have not undertaken to give a thorough history of French painting in the seventeenth century, we ought at least to mention the Coypel dynasty. Its chief, Noel, (1628-1707) is the type of the correct and laborious academician; his decorative panels are rich and agreeable, but his historical paintings do not lack lifelessness. Those by his son Antony (1661-1722) are more stately,

and although dating from 1704, his two pictures of *Athaliah Chased from the Temple,* one small and rich in colour, the other a large repetition for reproduction in tapestry, preserve the purest Louis XIV. stamp. I do not know whether we ought not equally to inscribe here the name of Santerre, whose *Susanna,* dating from the same year 1704, maintains rather the reserve of the finishing century than the unrestraint of the dawning epoch.

With all these painters, and with others whom we neglect or whose names have not come down to us, there was a strong and severe artistic discipline. Beneath the conventionalisms of school (but what period does not have its own way of looking at things?) it would be easy to find the race qualities, even when the artists expressed their thoughts in Italian formulas. After all, the French School then presented a grand display which ought not to be forgotten, and whose serious, noble and distinct lessons should be recalled from time to time. We have endeavoured to do this here. Other and eminent writers will have the good fortune to speak of more luxurious epochs, or those nearer to our present passions and sentiments; but we shall not regret having braved weariness if we have been able to influence some French souls to question more closely such masters as Poussin, Claude Lorraine, Le Sueur, Philip of Champaigne, the Le Nains, Le Brun himself, and to find in them the expression of the virtues of thought and art that constitute the real dignity of life.

ARSENE ALEXANDRE.

Philip of Champaigne.

Portrait of Cardinal Richelieu.

Negative by Braun, Clement & Cie

Philip of Champaigne.

Portraits of Mother Catherine Agnes Arnaud and Sister Catherine de Sainte-Susanne, daughter of Philip of Champaigne.

Negative by Braun, Clément & C^ie^

Claude Gellée, called Claude Lorraine.

Ulysses Restoring Chryseis to her Father.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

P. Mignard.

Sainte Cecilia Singing the Praises of the Lord.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

The Le Nain Brothers

Portraits in an Interior

Negative by Braun, Clément & Ci=

The Le Nain Brothers.

Repast of Peasants.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

P. Mignard.

Portrait of Frances d'Aubigné, Marchioness of Maintenon.

Negative by Braun, Clément & C^{ie}

N. Poussin.

Rape of the Sabines.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

N. Poussin.

Shepherds in Arcadia.

Negative by Braun, Clement & Co

N. Poussin.

Time Shielding Truth from the Attacks of Envy and Discord.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

N. Poussin.

The Triumph of Flora.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

N. Poussin.

Winter and the Great Flood.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

THE

GREAT MASTERS

IN THE

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THE FRENCH PRIMITIVES

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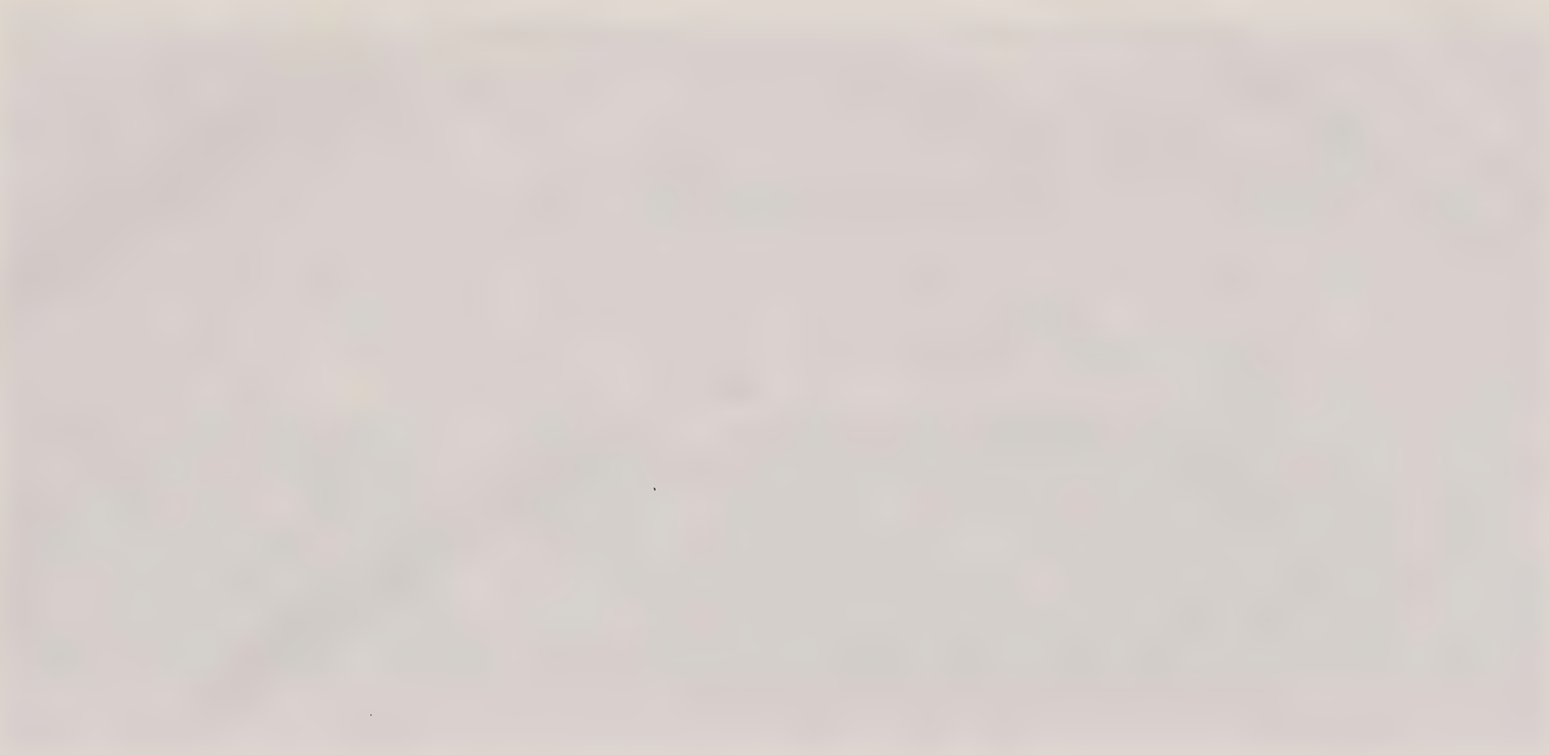

French School (Fifteenth Century)

Portraits of John Juvenal des Ursins, Baron of Trainel,
President of Parliament, who died in 1431, and
his wife, Michelle de Vitry, with their Eleven Children.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

THE FRENCH PRIMITIVES.

It is not in the galleries of the Louvre that the first realisations of pictorial art in France are to be found. Moreover, works of beginnings and research are rare in all places. During the centuries when the efforts of the race in the various orders of plastic production appeared with an unparalleled ardour and profusion, whilst there was a rousing of life, a discovery of nature and a haste to take possession of the visible world, was painting alone outside of the general movement? It is thus that is manifested the astonishment, and even the irritation of those who wish to find everywhere the proofs of national life and local spirit at the awakening of the obscure and startling world of the Middle Ages. These proofs exist superabundantly: they are at the porches of cathedrals, on the tower-spires, in the rood-lofts of the nave, in the choir, in the gleams of the stained-glass windows, in the wool of tapestries, in gold, silver, pewter and ivory objects, in the glistening oak of furniture. They are not only to be found in churches and castles, in ecclesiastical and lordly mansions; they exist in the humble dwellings, in all places where a carver of images was able to chisel the stone, cut out a mask, fashion a grimace or a smile. Seek farther and you will even discover painting, for it is on the miniatures of manuscripts, it lengthens and ornaments the old writings, simple, precise and child-like as it ought to be, with its juxtaposed details, brilliant with its golden grounds and illuminated tones, already exact for the costumes and landscapes, already full of life by the portraits and expression. All this is not yet a picture, but it is at least a promise of one, and we must be satisfied with this slow evolution and these touching preparations for the future. The illustration of manuscripts is one of the origins of our art of painting. Let us be careful to remember, however, that there were already decorated walls in the fourth century, and that the double influence of the Gallic-Roman antiquity and the Byzantine civilisation showed itself before the dark and frightful period of the year one thousand. Afterwards came the revival, the discovery of nature, the art of image-makers, the painting of altar-screens, apsis-pictures, furniture, the ingenuous evocation of legends and history, the observation of scenes and expressions, a malice identical with that

of the *Fabliaux*, the unrolling on the walls of the dance of the dead, and, very likely, a copy by painting of scenes fully arranged with landscape and personages, which the representation of the Mystery Plays furnished to the artistic spectators. After these attempts we are willing to admit that, in the definite creation of frescoes and the painted picture, France was taught by Italy and Flanders. The fresco was sure to be born in the land of fine light and dry atmosphere, which permitted the decoration of the walls, even the exterior walls, of the galleries of the cloisters sheltered from the sun but always fresh, without moisture. The picture that is preciously kept in a closed room and, by an additional measure of precaution, placed in boxes and between shutters, came, as a matter of course, from Flanders. But let us not forget that Cimabue appeared only at the end of the thirteenth century, and that the great discovery of the Van Eycks dates from the beginning of the fifteenth century. It is in remembering these points and dates that we should examine at the Louvre the few vestiges gathered from the ages preceding the Renascence.

One of the oldest of these witnesses is evidently the large altar-cloth, a gray camaieu on white silk, which came from the Narbonne Cathedral, and may be seen in the gallery devoted to drawings. It is divided into three compartments, and indicates its date by the figures of King Charles V. and the Queen, Jane de Bourbon, placed to the left and right in the central composition, representing a crucifixion. The first compartment, to the left, itself divided by ogival porticoes, brings together Judas's kiss, the scourging and bearing the cross. The right-hand compartment contains the scenes of the entombment, the descent of Christ into hell, and the appearance of Christ to Mary Magdalene.

From the following reign here is a painting, attributed to John Malouel and Henry Bellechose, where all the personages are mingled, although the composition includes no less than three subjects: *The Last Communion and Martyrdom of Saint Denis the Areopagite, First Bishop of Paris.* This painting is a large miniature, evidently an amplification of some small composition crowded into the page of a book. The developed lines become thin, the disproportions are heightened, but the perseverance in representing the body and the human face is inflexibly marked in this work, where Byzantine stiffness and lively suppleness are strangely united on the golden grounds. A Christ upon the cross rises in the centre and separates the two scenes of the communion and martyrdom of Saint Denis. This Christ is a poor man, already dead, who, at the end of his sufferings, sleeps his last sleep. No expression of a superior sentiment triumphs upon his unfortunate countenance, which would be inert without the contraction caused by the most intense agony. The body has already a death-like stiffness, and even a cadaverous dryness, which does not, however, prevent a continuous flow of blood from the crown of thorns, a trickling from the two finely-shaped hands pierced with enormous nails, a bursting out like the cascade of a stream that runs down upon the abdomen and hips to rejoin the jet spurting from the transpierced feet and falls in a shower upon the foot of the cross. The artist who conceived this representation of the divine drama has not spared the spectator's feelings. If the scene of the bishop's communion is expressed with tenderness, the martyrdom is a frightful butchery. A deacon's head has already rolled upon the ground, the body has been pushed not far from it, and the section is doubly shown with a barbarous ignorance. It is still more abominable to have to contemplate the bishop's head upon the block, his collar already cut out and nearly detached, and a horrible, melodramatic headsman who raises an enormous axe to strike another blow in the gaping wound. There is more expression in the gentle and melancholy attitude of the second deacon, who waits his turn, and in the face of the mitred bishop, seen through the bars of the prison in which he is receiving the last sacraments from a Christ clad in a red and gold garment, with a blue cloak carried by a red angel.

French School (Fourteenth Century).

The Last Communion and Martyrdom of Saint Denis the Areopagite, First Bishop of Paris.

It is to one of the same artists, John Malouel, that is attributed another painting: a *Dead Christ Sustained by the Almighty Father and the Virgin*. A stream of thick blood flows from the white, polished body, although in this work the face is more characteristic. The Almighty Father resembles a common figurant of the Mystery Plays, but the angels' countenances are animated by a childish emotion, and the too-youthful Virgin has an interrogative and anxious look. Less expressive and purely illuminated are the personages of an *Entombment*, of the fourteenth century, those of a very ordinary *Dead Christ*, of the fifteenth century, and those of a *Saint George*, victorious over the dragon at the left of a cross, and martyred at the right. I consider, however, that we should not pay too much attention to the bungles and confusion of these touching works. The apologies and mystifying imitations of tired theorists and powerless artists ought not to make us take as a termination what was really a starting point. It is hardly necessary to struggle against these unhealthy attempts of the present day, which soon vanish of their own accord, and it is also useless to overwhelm in the name of history the poor ancestors of art, so full of feverish emotion at their discoveries. They sought what their successors have found, they had a presentiment of future realisations, they stammered a language that was to be spoken by others, and by masters, thanks to these scholars. All this holds together, is the same thing, and there is nothing to be separated or rejected. These artists were all in accord to investigate life, meditate upon its appearances, scrutinise its depths and recreate it by durable images that should fix what was ephemeral. Consequently, the hesitations and persistency, the errors and discoveries, the powerless attempts and determined acts of the primitive painters charm the mind like the sight of a struggle, the victory of which we know to be

difficult and sure. We do not dream of codifying the weaknesses, but we find a sweet and powerful consolation in a contact with courage and perseverance, we admire the invincible force that always surmounts difficulties and defeats in its march towards truth. French painting in the admirable epoch of labour that I try to recount here, had the upward movement that sculpture had as early as the thirteenth century, when from Gothic it became naturalistic. A small painting, *The Virgin with the Child*, tells at once, and with a singular clearness, that a great conquest has been made, that it is no longer a time of essays but of approximate certainty. A sudden grandeur springs from the humble truth. The painter has represented the quiet scene that he had, perhaps, every day before his eyes, in his own home: a mother who is about to suckle her child. He has clothed this mother in a robe of red and gold brocade, with a blue mantle, and has mingled the two colours in a fine and rich harmony. He has decked the soft, inclined brow with a black velvet ribbon, in the centre of which shines a pearl clasp. And, above all, he has observed the instinctive movement of the hand that gently retires the breast from the bodice, and presses it in order to make the milk gush out upon the eager lips of the child. The infant, held by its mother's left arm, is entirely naked, with a large head and downy body, and agitates his impatient little hands. His wide-awake face contracts with happiness, and desire sparkles in his eyes. This touching scene, full of intimate observation, is significant, at the Louvre, of the evolution of French painting by the sobriety of the colouring, which no longer resembles the brilliant illuminations of the previous pictures, by an envelopment of light that determines the amplitude of the forms, and by a softened modelling that breaks away from hierarchical rules.

A work comes next the date of which we may, with almost perfect security, fix at the end of the fourteenth century or the beginning of the fifteenth century. *The Descent from the Cross*, before passing from Saint Denis to the Louvre was, in fact, placed at Saint-Germain-des-Prés, and the Superior of the Abbey, William, who died in 1418, is here represented among the personages surrounding Christ. He wears a black cassock and a red cape lined with green; kneeling behind Christ he supports his reclining body. This portrait is a thoughtful piece of work, and if it was not painted from life, it must have been executed at the moment of the Superior's death, or soon after, by the aid of authentic documents. I am inclined to believe that it was painted from life, on account of the correctness of the details, without speaking of all the reasons concerning the landscape and costumes that have caused this work to be assigned to a date between 1370 and 1380. As for the name of the painter, it is unknown. Van Eyck was at first designated, then the Venetian Fabrino, but these attributions have been abandoned, and it is to-day admitted, and very judiciously, that the author is a French artist who was under the influence of the Flemish School.

It is not at all surprising that the work was attributed one day, when it was intelligently examined, to the second Van Eyck. It has not his careful manner, subtle character or masterly exactitude, but the family resemblance is indisputable, as will be seen by an examination of some of the women's faces, by the personage of Saint John, conceived according to the Flemish type of the epoch, and the splendour, so complacently studied, of the garment worn by Joseph of Arimathea. This personage is one of the seven witnesses of the descent from the cross, and has his special type of Hebrew—the Oriental Hebrew—among these northern characters. He wears a long white beard and has the cautious eye of the doctors whom the people of the Middle Ages regarded with curiosity, and an anxiety that was not without respect when they passed in the Israelite quarters, where they were relegated. His tall turban is ornamented with precious stones and pearls, and over his green robe is thrown a magnificently-flowered sacerdotal cloak bordered with pearls, gems and metal pendants. He holds the nails and crown of thorns in his hands. To his left, Mary Magdalene, kneeling and wearing a pink cloak and white cap, holds a vase, upon the cover of which is the inscrip-

French School (Fifteenth Century).

Portrait of a Woman.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

tion LV CIPIO AP, which signified, according to tradition, Lucius Scipio the African. There are as many errors as words in this inscription, no Scipio being Consul at the moment of Christ's death, and the name of Lucius not belonging to either of the two Scipios who assumed the surname of the African, as has been remarked by M. Frederic Villot. The painter would have served history better by simply putting his name upon the vase held by Mary Magdalene. Did he wish, asks M. Villot, to show his erudition? It is doubtful, and we may readily believe that he simply copied the vase as it was, with its lettering. To return to the expression given to Mary Magdalene, which interests us more than the inscription, it is somewhat hard and cold, the mouth motionless, the look penetrating, and she would be a better seller at her counter, watching for a buyer, than a mournful courtesan before the body of her divine favourite. John, who is to the right of Joseph of Arimathea, is more truthfully represented in his part of a young and simple man, broken-hearted at the death of him whom he had known and loved, and a little astonished and timid in presence of the corpse. The Virgin, in a religious costume, helps to sustain Christ's body, turns aside and weeps, and thus manifests a very delicate shade of sentiment. For the woman kneeling beside the Virgin and who wipes her eyes, for the Abbot William, who supports the crucified body, and for another woman a little to the side, kneeling, with clasped hands, they are not entire strangers to the scene, but look on with evident tranquility. The spectacle of the unfortunate martyr is, however, painful enough to disturb their tranquility: the head inclined upon the shoulder, the body depressed, the arms and legs abandoned, the open wound in the side tumefied and bluish on the edges, sufficiently indicate the irreparable and bloody agony of the dead.

Before this reunion of personages assembled around the body of the martyr an interpretation of the subject comes to the mind, suggested, perhaps, by the decoration, setting aside the gibbets raised on the neighbouring hill, where the two thieves still hang. This grassy slope, these fields, this stream and all the personages perceived in the vicinity of the abbey, these people on horseback, this chariot, this woman with a basket upon her arm and a jug upon her head, and who is followed by a dog—all these details of town life make us think that we are in presence of one of the dramas of misery and death, suddenly exhibited in their melancholy ending to the eyes of the passers who abruptly stop to gaze upon them.

It is possible that this man has been taken from the river, that his family has been notified, and that he is there surrounded by these women who weep, by this priest who sustains him, by this useless doctor, by this woman who brings an ointment, and by these sympathisers and indifferent spectators. I have met such groups on the banks of the Seine, under an identical cold light, and the artist who could have seen them and known how to reproduce them as did the painters of the fifteenth century, still ignorant and already learned, would have also created a human emotion.

The art of the fifteenth century, if we continue to examine its productions almost chronologically, does not remain subservient to the traditional religious subjects that allow a certain simple fancy to the artist and turn him aside from interpretation, but do not give him full liberty with free existence. A diversity is soon to appear. The artist attached to some royal or lordly mansion, notwithstanding the new servitude he is likely to meet, will find the means of satisfying his eagerness of vision and of demonstrating the flexibility of his admirable profession in taking possession of a new field, in creating a painting of watchful, direct, redoubtable and historical truth. It is about the same everywhere, in all the centres of the provincial schools of that period. In a careful manner, attentive to all the details of costume, and preserving the same exactitude when they study and fix the features of the countenance, our intelligent and prudent artists take a physical inventory of the powerful seigniors who confide to them the care of making their effigy. With what fastidiousness and prudence at the same time they do their work! What concise portraits, which are about to speak but withhold their words, these artists have left of their sometimes debonair and more often troublesome models!

Here is a portrait of the Burgundian School, which is one of the oldest paintings of the fifteenth century possessed by the Louvre, if it was painted from life, for it reproduces the features of John the Fearless, who died in 1419. He has a high complexion, a tightly-closed mouth, the contracted jaws of violent-tempered characters, a strong-willed face with a vigilant slyness that is on the watch behind the keen eyes and strong forehead. This is the man who, after having had the Duke of Orleans assassinated, at first denied his crime, then ostentatiously avowed it. His costume is neither rich nor elegant; it is that of a middle-class citizen, with a few indications of high rank and wealth. He is in black, with fur collar and sleeves, a red hood with a coat of arms embroidered upon the left shoulder, a black cap with pearl ornaments. His son, Philip the Good, who also was ambitious and irascible, but, influenced by civilisation, who founded a university, and patronised letters and the arts, appears in a portrait painted after 1430, since he wears the collar of the Golden Fleece, an Order he instituted in that year. His resemblance to John the Fearless is indisputable; he has the same frame and features, but not the concentrated and vigilant expression. Success has done its work, and this prince, who reigns almost as a king at Dijon and Bruges over vine-clad Burgundy and rich Flanders, is now inclined to take an easy repose. The rich collar is the only outward sign of wealth upon the person of this Duke of Burgundy who dazzled his epoch by high living and festivities. In this portrait he wears a black suit with a white shirt bordered in black, and a black hood.

Although the other two paintings of the Burgundian School owned by the Louvre make us leap over the years rapidly, since they bring us to the threshold of the sixteenth century, they may be mentioned here. They are two portraits facing each other, and are, with probability, supposed to be the two shutters of a triptych, the central part of which is lost: *Peter II., Duke of Bourbon, Sire of Beaujeu,* and *Anne of France, Duchess of Bourbon, Dame of Beaujeu, Daughter of Louis XI.* The Duke died in 1503, and his wife in 1522. These effigies have an historical interest. Anne is shown in three-quarters profile, her hands clasped, but the expression of her countenance does not denote that complete abstraction of the outward world which the attitude of prayer ought to suggest. On the contrary, she is wide-awake, and this portrait has been judged to be the likeness of what Anne was in reality, a

French School (Fifteenth Century).

The Descent from the Cross.

wary politician and hard fighter, the worthy daughter of her father, who feared her intelligence and activity ; she held the regency herself during the minority of her brother, Charles VIII., punishing the hated agents of the dead king, but realising the paternal work, resisting the feudal lords and winning the battle of Saint-Aubin-du-Cormier against the Duke of Orleans, the future Louis XII., whom she kept prisoner for two years. She reunited Brittany to France. Her serious face, coldly painted, is characteristic of her wary life, and her interventions at decisive moments. Peter II., who was her associate in power, does not speak to us with the same eloquence. The two works, moreover, which are valuable on account of their documentary importance and their outlook on the country seen through the wide opening, are displeasing in form and colour. Saint Peter, in his lilac robe and green cloak, who accompanies the husband, and Saint John, in a green robe and red cloak, who stands beside the wife, holding the pyx, out of which a dragon springs, already display the bad religious style that is prevalent to-day.

A painting of the Provincial School, attributed to Nicolas Froment, of Avignon, is otherwise

charming and expressive. It is a diptych, with the portraits of René of Anjou, Count of Provence, Duke of Lorraine, King of Naples and Sicily, and his second wife, Jane of Laval. It is safe to affirm that we have here two living portraits in their reduced proportions. The modelling is a little hard, and denotes a long and painful effort ; the flesh in certain parts is wooden, for example, Jane's neck, which is squarish and ligneous ; the artist's desperate exertion is also shown in the old king's hands, which are scratched with paint. But this obstinate endeavour has given the artist success, and his work bears a sustained and indestructible character that communicates emotion. It would seem as though the painter had sworn to enclose his models within these little shutters united by a hinge, in this diminutive box, a few inches square that could easily be carried in the hand or placed in an overcoat pocket, a sort of private book made for the survivor of the couple, wherein might be recalled the souvenirs of the old love and peaceful happiness. The painter who has traced these two significant effigies with such a careful brush may well be, in truth, Nicolas Froment, of Avignon, or some other artist of the same region, as the instant chosen by the principal model for the painting of this portrait is when he finally found rest in his dear Provence, exposed to the sun like one of those trellises upon which wall-fruit ripens and against which old men warm themselves. The Good King René, Duke of Anjou, Count of Provence, Duke of Lorraine, King of Naples and Sicily, is tired of his

adventurous life. He is out of breath from having run from one to the other of his scattered fiefs to defend them against the rapacious crowd that fell upon his towns and countries as soon as his equestrian, warlike figure disappeared behind the horizon. He has lost everything except this mild county, and he experiences a secret satisfaction at this loss. He has the right no longer to wear the helmet and cuirass, the sword and the lance, henceforth too heavy for the head, body and arms of this sexagenarian. He has put on his brown, and fur-lined quilted wrap, and covered his bald head with a warm black velvet head-band that comes down to the ears. He is a poet and a painter more than a warrior and politician, and if his life has thus far been the reverse he at least wishes to finish it with his veritable physiognomy. He was painting partridges when warned that Louis XI. was stealthily taking Anjou from his domination, and did not stop his work to cry out against the robber or to start off in pursuit of the ravisher. Henceforward no one would be able to trouble the peaceful labour of his mind, since everything that could be taken from him had been taken, and he would leisurely seek rhymes for his rondeaus and harmonise the colours of his paintings. He has also the right deliberately to place himself before the conscientious portrait-painter to whom he has given an order, and here he is, in fact, camped in the hollow of his little shutter, with his physiognomy of an honest, valiant, thoughtful, perspicacious and submissive man. Crouched in his furs, wearing his head-band and holding his bead-roll, which falls upon the frame, he would appear to be a Canon in his stall, a church-warden on his bench, or an old scholar in his library, if he had not consented to bedeck himself with the golden interlaced shells and the archangel of the Order of Saint Michael. He is fat, chilly, sedentary. Cares have stamped their indelible mark upon his high forehead. A thin, white, frizzled lock peeps out from the back of his head-band. The fleshy outlines of his face, falling in the thick flaps, are confounded with the enlargement of his collar. Still, an invincible energy abides in the reddish complexion of this king who has lived in the open air, an obstinate will remains in this short profile, and we can almost find the old visage of the Sicilian and Lorrainian warrior under the softened exterior of the aged man. All the lines of valour and intelligence are here, the firmly-drawn chin, the well-speaking mouth that has retained its delicate sinuosity, and the beautiful blue eyes wide open upon life.

Facing this sensible and upright prince, who was fatally condemned to be dispossessed by his thievish neighbours, and who showed, notwithstanding, a singular force of character in playing the part by which his natural existence was changed, his wife, Jane of Laval, appears to us with the same simplicity as her amiable husband. There is more sadness and gravity in her visage than in the contented face of her seignior, and her pale-blond complexion, sharp features, blue eyes strangely opened obliquely, but at the same time possessing an incontestable softness, appear to be under some gloomy influence. The artist does not seem to have comprehended his model as well as in René's portrait. What is expressed, however, with an intelligent discernment, is the aspect of this middle-class housewife, this quiet peasant, dressed in a dark robe that shows only the white edge of a skirt, and wearing a black coif that looks as though it had been cut out of the same piece of velvet as her husband's head-band. She is the faithful companion who quitted the palace of Aix with her lord to live in the country, among villagers, and to take part in their festivities. René has celebrated this existence in his pastoral poem of "Regnaut and Jehanneton, or the Love of the Shepherd and Shepherdess;" and at the end of his manuscript, after having designed the coat of arms of Sicily and Laval, he terminates by these two pleasant lines, interesting to repeat before the diptych at the Louvre :

Icy sont les armes, dessoubz ceste couronne,
Du bergier dessus dit et de la bergeronne.

There is not the same intimacy in the large portrait of *John Juvenal des Ursins, Baron of*

N. Froment, of Avignon.

Portraits of René of Anjou, Count of Provence, Duke of Lorraine,
King of Naples, and his second Wife, Jane of Laval.

Trainel, President of Parliament, who died in 1431, and of his wife, Michelle de Vitry, with their Eleven Children. It is a decorative painting in black, red, garnet, gray and gold, once an ornament of the Saint Remi Chapel in Notre Dame de Paris, owned by the Ursins, or Orsini family, and the architecture of the ground, which represents the openings of three naves, ought, in fact, to harmonise with the sculptured stone surroundings. In front of this background of vaults and statues, between the columns and arches surmounted by angels bearing coats of arms, is hung a gold cloth before which the thirteen personages kneel in close ranks and rigid postures. They all have the same penitential and reverent bearing, and probably did not, in the Saint Remi Chapel, break the unity of aspect of the living crowd that kneeled beneath their painted figures. The misfortune, now that the work is not in its original place and that it becomes necessary to

find another signification than that of its similar lines and harmonious spots of colour, is not only that the drawing of the figures is thin and hard, but the study of all these interesting personages is worthless and has not even been attempted by the artist. There is here, however, the great Juvenal des Ursins, who was Provost of Paris and resisted the attack of the Duke of Burgundy's butcher-boys, notwithstanding his house was burned and his life threatened. There is also here his wife, Michelle de Vitry, and their children : Jehan Juvenal des Ursins, Bishop and Count of Beauvais, afterwards Bishop and Duke of Laon; Jane Juvenal des Ursins, who was married to Nicolas Brulart, King's Counsellor; Loys Juvenal des Ursins, King's Chamberlain and Bailiff of Troyes; Jane and Eude Juvenal des Ursins, the first married to Peter de Chailli, and the second to Denis des Mares; Denis Juvenal des Ursins, Equerry and Cup-Bearer to Monseignior Loys, Dauphin of Vienne and Duke of Guienne; Sister Mary Juvenal des Ursins, nun at Poissy; William Juvenal des Ursins, Seignior and Baron of Trainel, in his day King's Counsellor, Bailiff of Sens, Deputy Chancellor of France; Peter Juvenal des Ursins, Equerry; Michael Juvenal des Ursins, Equerry and Seignior of La-Chapelle-en-Brie ; James Juvenal des Ursins, Archbishop and Duke of Rheims, First

Peer of France, King's Counsellor and President at the Chamber of Accounts. All these names and titles are inscribed beneath the personages, and with the aid of the information thus furnished we may believe that the date of the work ought to be found in the neighbourhood of 1445, some years after the death of the head of the family, which took place in 1431. The Provost's wife, beside him in her widow's costume, would suffice to show that the work was painted as a commemorative homage. Our information ends here, for the artist was not a seeker ; he was not very careful, either, as he not only contented himself with executing the typical costumes of the laymen, bishops, widows and young ladies, but adopted a similar type of physiognomy, so much so that the heads might be indifferently changed. This is carrying a little too far the veracious theory of the family air, and however interesting these costumes may be, more human observation would not have been superfluous.

If you now care to know one of these vague personages by means of the work of a great artist who comes just at the right moment to teach us a noble lesson, examine in the Salon Carré the *Portrait of William Juvenal des Ursins, Seignior and Baron of Trainel, Chancellor of France under Charles VII. and Louis XI.*, painted by John Fouquet. This time the model has his own face, characteristic and indisputable, and is placed in marvellously-arranged surroundings. The room in which he is portrayed is wainscoted with panels of green marble fitted into carved and gilt wood-work. At the top of two leafy pilasters, on each side of the central panel, two muzzled bears rampant support the red and silver coat-of-arms of the Juvenal des Ursins family, and everywhere in the ornamentation bears march, gambol, climb and bestride branches. Still, notwithstanding the gilt, all this ground is discreet, well fixed, and reveals only a network of capricious lines restrained by the soberness of the architecture. The gold itself has become mellowed, and presents a rich, dull tone of old brass ; this mellowness leaves to the personage all its value with all its force and expression. This likeness of William Juvenal des Ursins is not a flat effigy cut out of the background like stencil-work ; his body has life and volume, moves in respirable air and keeps at a distance from the surrounding objects. Neither is this portrait a simple costume, although the model is magnificently dressed and his raiment rightly adds its importance to that of the figure. It is a man who is present, and makes known his powerful individuality upon this panel. He owes a great deal of the authority he imposes upon the spectator to the really confident manner in which he has been disposed. The head appears in three-quarters profile upon the central panel, which has a dark-green ground, all the left side of the face being in shadow. What we see directly in front of us is the powerful, high forehead, the prominent cheek-bone and the neck which, with the large ear, stand out in relief like an engraved medal. Although in profile the features are not sacrificed, the shadow in which they turn is transparent, and bright strokes of light prepared by half-tones bring out with a living reality the furrows of the solid brow, the thick nose, strong mouth, massive chin, and eye whose striking regard is directed towards the penumbra, and the luminous white of which is the vital centre of the portrait. The powerful head of this citizen, who was a man of law and of the sword, is covered with hair closely-cropped in the style formerly adopted in certain religious communities ; his dark-red robe is trimmed with brown fur. If you notice that a gilt purse hangs from his belt, and that an open book lies before him on a yellow, red and gray cushion, you will at once perceive what a fine and rich harmony of tones plays in front of the background of green marble and gilt wood-work. The build of this figure is no less remarkable than the tinted surroundings in which it appears. As in all works of this size, moreover, there is no need of making this distinction. The shape sustains the colour, the unity is established, and the means employed serve only to place the living figure more boldly in relief by the aid of light and shade. This figure breathes in its immobility,

Francis Clouet (Called Janet).

Portrait of Charles IX., King of France.

it fills the frame by the rising of the face, by the solid bust, by the broad shoulders, made still broader by the thick padding of the robe, by the free and rounded movement of the arms, and by the hands, almost covered by the sleeves, clasped upon the open book. Surely, this portrait is a masterpiece.

Here is a second masterpiece, still greater and more original: *Portrait of Charles VII., King of France.* The painting is of another style, the arrangement creating a new figurative expression, which appears as a revelation of diversity after the portrait of William Juvenal des Ursins. The King is enclosed in a sort of puppet box with bluish open curtains, before an indistinct checkered background through which pierces a glimmer. The royal per-

sonage did not have the same noble bearing as his Chancellor, and John Fouquet was certainly incapable of giving to his model an air that he did not possess. The artist's triumph here, as in the preceding painting, consists in the truthful expression imparted to the personage. What a pitiable subject was offered to the painter by this King of Agnes Sorel and Joan of Arc, so little sure of his kingdom, who had his own son, the Dauphin, for an enemy, after having had the English! His countenance shows no violent agitation at this fatality that has swooped down upon his realm and himself, and it is with the same weak physiognomy that he flees before defeat and figures in the apotheosis of victory. We have of this King only one expressive saying, stamped with the malicious and observing spirit of the Middle Ages. When the Dauphin, who was to be Louis XI., had deserted the paternal mansion and taken refuge with the Duke of Burgundy, Charles VII. remarked: "The Duke has welcomed a fox who will eat his chickens." He himself, who saw so clearly in this case, had not been the good husbandman that knows how to guard his field and farm-yard; and besides, as Renan says of sheep, chickens are always eaten. All this has not prevented the placing on the upper part of the frame of the portrait painted by Fouquet, the inscription: THE VERY VICTORIOUS KING OF FRANCE, which was hyperbolic, whilst on the lower part of the frame we read: × CHARLES × VII. × OF THIS NAME ×, which is simply correct. But all the inscriptions will not make any difference. The gift of seeing and the skill in painting have enabled John Fouquet to make out the most terrible accusation against the chances of power and the possible debility of those holding it. This poor, bald head under the large blue felt hat embroidered with gold, the big, dismal nose falling between two little eyes upon a weak mouth, the lifeless position of the hands resting upon a brocade cushion and almost buried in the fur wrists—all this would be nothing but physical poverty, and a lofty beauty would shine upon these wasted features, as upon so many other worn and pensive faces, if the flame of thought burned within the eyes and animated with its invincible energy this dead flesh. Examine once more the portrait of René of Anjou, which is hung near by and which is more the portrait of an old man than this one, and remark the difference between them. Here it is not only the distress but the sentiment of stupidity of

a drunken man who can scarcely open his swelled and heavy eyelids. He made no effort to strengthen his physiognomy, as we see by the drooping of his wine-dregs cheeks. He is powerless to reanimate this visage buried under I know not what sort of stupor. Michelet, who was always ardent in the discovery of the physiological explanations of his personages, furnishes this meaning : "The easy-going Charles VII. was fond of women, and had some reason for his liking. After the death of Agnes Sorel he had other and less excusable affections." And the historian cites some documents that are at the French National Library : "Account of 1454-5, to Mademoiselle de Villequier, to aid her in keeping up her position, two thousand francs. A good many gifts to women, widows, etc. 1454-5, to Margaret de Salignac, damsel, as a gift to her by the King to aid her in getting a chamber for her confinement. 1454-5, to Madame de Montsoreau, a gift of three hundred francs." Perhaps the Charles VII. of the Louvre portrait is thinking of these figures. In any case, he was not wanting in subjects for reflection, and it is no longer a question of suppositions when Michelet sums up this sad existence : "Poor Charles VII. felt himself little by little surrounded by a disturbing and malevolent host; he was no longer sure of anything. This spell became so fixed that his mind grew feeble, and he finished by despairing of himself. By fear of dying by poison he allowed himself to die of hunger." This finishes the picture of this unfortunate sire, who was a victim of his feeble character and became an easy prey to the blows of destiny.

The great artist who conceived and executed these two splendid portraits has not been long in full possession of his renown, for it is only a few years since his paintings were classified among the Unknown Works of the French School in the catalogue compiled by M. Frederic Villot. Even this designation was an advance, as the portrait of William Juvenal des Ursins, acquired in 1835, was then attributed to Wolgemuth, Albert Durer's master, and the portrait of Charles VII., bought in 1838, was considered as a Greek work ! Researches and studies had, however, been made as early as 1837 by M. de Bastard, who, in his biography of Fouquet, gave him a first place in the history of art. Without being able to establish the dates with certainty, it was known that the Touranian painter was born about the year 1415 and died about 1485; that he had travelled in Italy and immediately become celebrated in that country, as he was entrusted with the painting of the portrait of the Pope Eugene IV., which was placed in the church of Minerva. It is evident, especially in the William Juvenal portrait, that Fouquet had been to Rome, and had studied and comprehended the masterly qualities of the great Italians of the fifteenth century, without, however, servilely copying them ; and his genius, which was able to accept the teaching, used this new force that was revealed to him only to strengthen his invincible love of nature. It is the same with the portrait of Charles VII. and with another work that is not at the Louvre, the admirable diptych painted for Etienne Chevalier, Counsellor of Charles VII., Comptroller of Accounts and Treasurer of France. This diptych, which was given by Chevalier to the church of Notre Dame at Melun, was afterwards broken in two, and by the most criminal carelessness we possess neither of the two compartments. One, the Virgin and Child Jesus, where the Virgin is believed to represent the living image of Agnes Sorel, is in the Antwerp Museum ; the other, a portrait of Etienne Chevalier, accompanied by his patron Saint Etienne, is in the Berlin Museum. The important thing, after all, is that the work exists ; but something else remains of John Fouquet's labours. This great painter was an accomplished miniaturist and had found in Etienne Chevalier a resolute amateur, for it was for him that he executed the ninety-one miniatures to illustrate the translation of Boccacio's "Noble Men and Unfortunate Women," the manuscript of which is in the Munich Library. The frontispiece of this manuscript, representing Charles VII. presiding at a seat of justice among a crowd of personages, was ascribed to the Van Eyck brothers, as the William Juvenal had been attributed to Wolgemuth, although the second Van Eyck died in 1441, and the com-

French School (Sixteenth Century).

Portrait of John of Bourbon-Vendôme, Count of Enghien.

Negative by Braun, Clement & Co.

Corneille of Lyon, (Attributed to).

Portrait of Louisa de Rieux, Marchioness of Elbeuf.

position is dated 1458. It is also for Etienne Chevalier that was undertaken and completed the series of miniatures for the Prayer Book that was mutilated at the beginning of the eighteenth century; forty pages found their way to Germany, as was the case with the second compartment of the Melun diptych; M. Feuillet de Conche acquired a forty-first page, and Lady Pringle a forty-second. Fouquet, having become official painter and illuminator to King Louis XI., made twelve miniatures for the manuscript of Josephus's "Jewish Antiquities," which is in the French National Library; this work, translated by William Coquillard, was begun for John, Duke of Berry, by Adrian Beauneveu, and finished by James d'Armagnac. For Louis XI., Fouquet illustrated a Prayer Book destined for Mary of Cleves, Duchess of Orleans, and made the painted model of the King's tomb.

As a miniature painter, Fouquet is represented at the Louvre by two marvels united in the same frame. One is St. Genevieve, patron saint of Paris; she is standing in the middle of a field, and spins

while tending her flock. Around her are four young girls, one standing and the others seated. Not far distant, a King, followed by five cavaliers, comes on horseback to cross the spot. It is a pleasing picture of rural life, thoroughly simple and natural. By the expressive faces, and calm movements, as well as by the sentiment of passiveness and habit, Fouquet here reveals himself as the direct ancestor of the Lenain brothers and John Francis Millet. And again, by the clear and delicious landscape, by the bluish hills perceived in the distance beneath the buoyant clouds, by the pretty little green tree the tender leaves of which so gently flutter in the air, the old master stretches out his hand from the depths of the past to Claude Monet and Camille Pissaro, who were so unjustly criticised for having again found and magnified this charm of nature. The second miniature, very different, which makes us admire the variety of vision and execution of this prodigious artist, is the illustration of the act of Saint Martin cutting his cloak and dividing it with a beggar. Nothing could be more picturesque and original than the arrangement imagined by Fouquet. He has sketched in these few square inches one of the finest landscapes that can be seen, by the manner in which he has chosen his point of view and advanced to the centre of the composition the angle formed by a bridge and a quay. He has thus

created a triangle of water in which is reflected the mass of constructions with the light of the sky, and has designed two roads for the body of horsemen that pass. The first squad has already cleared the corner, and we see only the rear of the horses and the backs of the soldiers who enter and are about to disappear under an archway. The rest of the horsemen arrive straight ahead and stop, for the old beggar who muttered his paternoster has advanced among the horses in front of Saint Martin. The Saint has pulled up his horse, stopped all of his followers and is about to give to the mendicant a part of his red cloak. There could be nothing better ordained or more rational than this tiny scene. The beggar and the warrior have their individual character and particularity distinctly established. The troop of men-at-arms and caparisoned horses has a regular and heavy movement. The light reflected from the river fills this stony landscape, this prison on the quay and the houses, with an ineffably buoyant charm.

By the side of these exquisite works there is, necessarily, some heaviness and vulgarity stamped on the other miniatures of the French School of the fifteenth century possessed by the Louvre : *A Sitting of the Roman Senate*, illustrating an incident of Roman history; the *Quarrel of Charles the Bald and Gerard of Roussillon*, divided into three scenes ; the *Emblems of the Crucifixion*, with an ornamental border of flowers and foliage. To again find a little of the lithesome and expressive charm of life we shall be obliged to look at the two miniatures on vellum, taken from a translation of Ovid's "Art of Love." The miniature where the young men and women, assembled around a table, are all dressed in white is especially pleasing by its delicate touches and pale harmony. But we are here at the beginning of the sixteenth century and must first turn back to the very extraordinary portrait of a woman in Louis XII. costume, which thus gives its date at the end of the fifteenth century.

This lady is really pathetic, and the expression of her face is so perfectly in harmony with the accessory intentions of the painting and its frame that her destiny is written in the most melancholy and inexorable manner. It was a skilful and intuitive artist that modelled with such an extremely delicate touch this sad face, this high forehead, these globular eyes wide apart from the large descending nose, and this thick mouth beneath which the face is abruptly terminated by a weak chin. The appearance of this characteristic physiognomy immediately imposes a belief in the fidelity of its resemblance. It is feature by feature, with the firm resolve of fixing a faithful likeness, that this woman's head was copied in a posture that was probably familiar to her, bent down under the weight of the too heavy forehead, as though drawn by the too large nose and lips. This woman was undoubtedly of high rank and wealth, for she is dressed richly and even with a special coquettishness. Upon her slightly faded blond hair is a red bonnet bordered with quilling and covered with a lining of black velvet ornamented with red, black and white pearls. She wears a white stomacher fitted squarely in an under robe of red velvet, over which is another garment in blue silk with fur-lined sleeves. Between the red and the blue of the two garments hangs a medal upon which is the effigy of a crowned king holding a sceptre. Around the neck a collar with clasps and pendants; then, a gold chain, from which is suspended upon the breast a large medallion representing a Saint John the Baptist, surrounded by big gems, emeralds and sapphires. On the fore and little fingers of the right hand and on the left thumb are rings studded with large precious stones. The fine, long and pale left hand, open and showing the palm, holds affectedly a streamer that unfolds as it rises, and upon which are these significant words : De Quoilque non vede, yo my recorde : "I recall myself to those whom I do not see." To find the thought that inspired this device we must look for it in the small blue eyes that appear pale beside the precious stones; we must also search for it at the bitter junctures of the nostrils and the mouth and at the mouth itself, sensual, greedy and melancholy. We must still seek for it among

French School (Sixteenth Century).

Portrait of Claudia of Beaune, Dame of Châteaubrun, Duchess of Roannais.

Negative by Braun, Clement & Cie

all these amazing and childish details, undoubtedly imposed by the model upon her painter : this scattering of pansies painted upon the gold panel grounds, these same pansies diversified by forget-me-nots, which are renewed upon the frame, fortunately preserved, and these initials E and S placed alternately between the flowers. We have here a forsaken woman who wishes to excite the remorse of an ungrateful companion, or else she is an anxious woman who fears departure and absence and wishes to recall herself to the souvenir of the one from whom she is to be separated. In any case she is a heart-broken woman who has herself written her romance in conjunction with her painter, has underlined by so many symbolic accessories her stupor and sadness of a poor witched person, her grief at having been made a victim, and who, even after years, is still astonished and seems to suffer in her flowered frame.

The last painting of the fifteenth century possessed by the Louvre is *The Virgin Between Two Donors,* attributed to John Perréal, called Jean de Paris, not, without doubt, because he was born at Thizy, near Lyons, but because he was the valet and painter in ordinary to Charles VIII. and Louis XII. He was also an architect and decorator, who constructed Brou and organised the royal entries, with processions and triumphal arches. The work that is classed as his production, without other decisive proofs than the initials I and P on the two pilasters, shows a certain indifferent wants of firmness, notwithstanding some fine qualities of execution. The Virgin is seated on a high chair, the back of which is formed of marble pilasters, between which is hung a golden drapery. She is clothed in a robe and a cloak of two shades of pink ; she has beautiful Flemish-blond hair, which falls crimped and undulating upon her shoulders. She holds in her hand an apple that Jesus refuses with one of those movements made by children who writhe in order to escape from the maternal hands, and which is very well indicated. The child appears to be more interested in the two donors, the man wearing a reddish-brown cloak trimmed with fur, the hands clasped and a ring on the forefinger, the woman in a white hood and black bodice, holding a rosary ; she is calm and cunning; he, astonished and simple. Before them is a crystal vase containing flowers. As a specimen of technical skill this little canvas possesses a certain interest if we examine the faces and the details separately ; but as a whole it is a mixture of affectation and amplitude, and shows a diffusion, an uncertainty of expression, and, in a word, a want of unity which, without destroy-

ing its documentary value, does not peremptorily establish the glory of John Perréal, whose name, however, can only figure here as a matter of attribution.

Great uncertainty will also exist at the moment when we reach the sixteenth century, but works are going to appear of such brilliancy, perfect observation and new beauty, that at least the group of painters who produced them will reap the benefit of a collective artistic appellation. These works are the Clouets and those of the Clouet School. The first of the Clouet name is signalled as a Flamand, living at Brussels in 1475, a receipt of this date having been found for works executed by him for the Duke of Burgundy, which reduces to nothing the supposition that he came to Paris as early as 1460, and that he was married at Tours, where his son was born. It is probable that the biographies of father and son have been confounded, and that it is the second John Clouet who originated the family at Tours. In this matter we must confine ourselves to the few fixed dates and precise facts. Now it is certain that the second John Clouet established himself in France before the accession of Francis I., that he was married at Tours in 1522 to Jane Boucault, daughter of Gatien Boucault, gold and silversmith and citizen of Tours, as is certified by a bill of sale of June 6 of that year, and that he was already painter in ordinary to the King, since there exists a receipt from him dated December 22, 1518, showing that he received annually a pension of eighteen hundred francs. He took this place between 1513 and 1518, his predecessor, John Bourdichon, still figuring in the accounts of 1513; he bought in 1522 the position of King's valet, and we thus follow him through the royal accounts until the year 1536 under the names of Jehan, Jehannot, or Jehannet Clouet, or under the simple first name of Jehannet, Jennet, Jainet, Jeannet. He died about the year 1541. It is at this date that his son Francis received the naturalisation papers that were refused to the father, and at the same time the origin of the latter is established; he is described as a foreigner, not native of the kingdom. The father did not obtain from the reigning King, nor from his predecessor, the title of Frenchman he reclaimed, notwithstanding his official position. These facts serve to settle the Flemish origin of the art of the Clouets, and in this consists their principal interest.

There exists no authentic painting by John Clouet; but his position as painter in ordinary to the King, and the probable date of the *Portrait of Francis I.,* which is at the Louvre, have permitted the attribution to him, with all appearance of probability, of this work, which was still at Fontainebleau in 1731, and until then ascribed to Jeannet. Afterwards it fell among the "Unknown," and finally it was said to be by Mabuse. There is really no reason for not giving it back its primitive paternity. Whatever its origin, it is a singular and magnificent portrait. The King appears here in all the pride of youth. Surely, he is not more than thirty, and this is a reason for believing that perhaps this portrait is the first work executed by John Clouet as painter in ordinary to His Majesty, about the year 1518. It shows the strength of a young man and also the elegance of a new period. We have finished with kings in brown robes, black head-bands and old hats. This King wears a short coat of white satin edged with black velvet and embroidered with gold. A second garment of the same material, and with slashed sleeves, covers the jerkin. Around the neck a gold collar with pearls, from which hangs the medal of Saint Michael. The head is covered with a black cap braided with precious stones and ornamented with a curled white plume. The artist has shown his taste and delight in painting this iridescent sumptuousness, this harmony of black and white, gold and silver; but he has given proof of a still more precious quality: he has placed a living body under this satin, and he knew the particular person whom he had before his eyes. I really believe that it is impossible to understand Francis I. without having seen this portrait: these soft, effeminate, weak, white hands that emerge from the satin sleeves with I know not what unquiet expression of "hands that they are"—as Paul Verlaine says of his own hands—this large opening

French School (Sixteenth Century).

Ball given in 1581 at the Court of Henry III.,
on the occasion of the marriage of Anne, Duke of Joyeuse,
with Margaret of Lorraine.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

at the neck uncovered by the squarely-cut jerkin, this white collar that runs into the thick shoulders, and this small head with its hair as smooth and glossy as that of a wig, the thin moustache, the light and bushy beard, the dull, unintelligent eyes where the regard lies in wait, the long, fleshy nose, the fine upper lip, the lower one sensual and twisted. What a perfect agreement between this portrayal of the man and his real existence ! It is the satyr in silk garments, the faun of the Renascence suddenly springing out from the thickets and bounding to the chase ; and whether he puts on the court dress or the battle armour, whether he lives an easy life in the castles of the Loire or makes his entry into the Italian cities, he is always impelled by his instincts. No control, no obstacle. He is the son of Louisa of Savoy, who has left a reputation for gallantry and violence. He has at once the effeminacy and the audaciousness of the libertine, frightening even his sister, Margaret of Valois, who loved him and served him with such a warm affection, and terrifying

the Mayor of Manosque's daughter to such an extent that she disfigured herself to appease his regard and desire. It will be the glory of the unknown painter, probably John Clouet, to have rendered visible this figure of conqueror in full force, and to have so strongly and naturally represented the physiological man under the royal disguise.

Pass over a few years and look at the other Francis I. towards the age of fifty,—six years, perhaps, before his death,—and this figure will substantiate the proof of the other one. This portrait has not the same artistic fulness, although it has been attributed to Holbein and a similar portrait in an English gallery has been ascribed to Leonardo da Vinci ; but it bears such a strong stamp of verity, and imposes such a logical conclusion to the preceding portrait, that it is impossible to separate them. It has, however, nothing of the manner of the Clouet School, and is rather the work of some Italian painter who came to Fontainebleau. The King is here sketched towards the end of his existence. He is still covered with silk and gold, embroideries and pearls ;

his red jerkin is cut in the same fashion as the short coat in white satin, and more profusely trimmed, while the curled white plume continues to ornament the cap. The man, however, is no longer the same. He has the same hands and features, but the flesh is puffed and bloated, an unhealthy redness colours the unhealthy fat. The physiognomy is no longer strong and fine, and the indolent charm has given way to the deterioration of a degenerated man. He has been ill since 1538, the uvula was cut in 1541, and we have here in this attire the Francis I. vanquished, indifferent to the kingdom, persecutor of letters, murderer of the Vaudois, the King without energy and conscience.

He may again be found in his best days, as conqueror of Marignan, in a miniature at the Louvre, which is a repetition of the portrait by Janet, ascribed, naturally, to Holbein, that is in the Uffizi Gallery at Florence. The miniature at the Louvre has preserved the air and grandeur of this cream-coloured horse caparisoned in red with a tuft of plumes upon his head, and of this warrior King in black steel armour inlaid with gold, who holds the reins in his left hand and a mace in the right. It is still he in a little round miniature, and it is he in a small painting very nearly like the half-length portrait, the same black doublet with slashed sleeves, the hair and beard more fawn-coloured. The more I think of it, the more it seems to me reasonable to ascribe these portraits of Francis I. to John Clouet, painter in ordinary and King's valet, for they all represent the monarch in his youth and early manhood, and not to Francis Clouet, John's son, who succeeded his father only in 1541, after the King's illness, the year even of the surgical operation.

Francis Clouet's renown will be sufficiently complete. He does not appear to have filled his office with Francis I. until 1547, at the moment of the King's death. It was he who was charged to model the sovereign's face and hands for the painted and clothed effigy that was to figure in the funeral procession. By this fact it will be seen that the duties of painter in ordinary included some singular work. It is Francis Clouet who executed the decorative painting for the church. He was paid for his usual and extra work 600 francs a quarter, or 2,400 francs a year, which indicates an increase of 600 francs over his father's salary. But for this sum he did other work than making banner models and wax casts. He was already in favour at the time of his father's death, and we may reasonably suppose that he was associated with him in his artistic labour, for the King's order turning over to him the real and personal estate of Jehannet Clouet, which was forfeited to the crown, his father being an alien, recognized Francis Clouet's ability and expressed great hope for his future. This hope was fulfilled. The large *Portrait of Henri II., King of France*, is not admitted to be by his hand, as it is considered inferior in comparison with more evidently perfect works. It is possible that this portrait is a copy of a larger one and that this copy may not be by Francis Clouet. A careful examination of the painting convinces me that it ought not to be so disdained. It is not equal to the portrait of Elisabeth of Austria, which is the finest work by Francis Clouet at the Louvre; it is not so good, either, as the portrait of Charles IX., but it has certain points of resemblance to this work. The handling is heavier and it has not yet this clear transparency and light precision that characterises the masterpieces already enumerated, and those at Antwerp, Berlin and in England. But what of that? Has not Francis Clouet, like all artists, made his way progressively and marked the stages? It is not at all impossible that the same hands established the proportions of the Henry II. and the Charles IX., painted these garments in deep black where the golden touches are like so many compartments, and above all expressed the real character of this dull, sleepy face where the contracted mouth alone announces the possibility of a brutal awakening.

The *Portrait of Charles IX.* is painted in a superior manner. The young King, who died at the age of twenty-four, and who here seems to be only eighteen, perhaps sixteen, is almost beardless,

French School (Sixteenth Century).

A Kneeling Abbess.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie.

with a little down upon the lips and chin; he is standing in the opening of two green-silk curtains, the right hand holding his gloves rests upon the back of a red-velvet armchair ornamented with pearls and silver embroidery. The youthful monarch placed in this dull harmony of colours wears a black jerkin and cloak, with white striped-silk sleeves, white small-clothes and shoes. All these white tones are exquisitely soft, and the delight of distinguishing the quality of the stuffs, and of making the different shades play in the light, is here shown with a fascinating security. It is still the art of the miniature-painter that triumphs with the new resources of oil painting. The artist took delight in giving a geometrical precision to the ornaments, embroideries, lace ruffs, gold of the collar and the sword-hilt; but this clever handling is always absolutely exact, the "nothing too much" is realised, and the dainty painting with its complete and solid groundwork remains delicious under its definite modelling. The structure of the body, of the hands and the face is irreproachable. The sickly and weakened character of the Valois race is demonstrated by this pale flesh, these narrow eyes, with their side-long glance, their oblique and slightly waggish look, according to Michelet, this pinched mouth and all the traits of the latent frenzy that precipitated itself from the King of Saint Bartholomew.

The beauty of history and of art are again surpassed in the *Portrait of Elizabeth of Austria, Queen of France, Wife of Charles IX.*, daughter of Maximilian II. and Maria of Austria, and granddaughter of Charles V. Here we have perfect skill; Holbein is matched. The wonder and the secret are to have represented with such truthfulness and minuteness the costume and its ornaments, the set of pearls and gems that imprisons the hair, the ruff lace and all the other pearls and precious stones, the dark emeralds, the bright rubies of the collar, and of the bodice, the puffs of the neckerchief, the slashes of the sleeves, the silver damask that shines softly on the gold cloth of the robe, and the finger rings. The marvel is, also, to have done all this with a perfection impossible to surpass, to have revealed at the same time the meaning of the superior life of the flesh, of the hands and face, and to have opposed the interior life which flushes to the luminous surfaces to the brilliant and reflected life of the stuffs and ornaments. The splendour of the gems is subdued by the softness of the hands; the velvety eyes and the light of the regard extinguish all the reflexions and all the lustre; the work of the fine brushes, so deliciously visible in the delicacy of the costume and ornaments, disappears to leave in full domi-

nation the life of the being who breathes and dreams, the serenity of the little Austrian princess, the prudence stamped in the lines of the well-closed mouth, the quiet glance, the discerning thought that observes under the candid brow. Peaceable and tender wife of the sombre King who felt the grip of fatality upon him, and of the furious madman with poetic lulls, if it be true that she was, with Mary Touchet, the occasion of the amorous transports of the sovereign tormented by souvenirs and remorse, she knew how to remain the saddened and reserved spectator of the bloody incidents and their savage ending.

Here closes the authentic part of Francis Clouet's work, the part that is characterised by quiet skill, limpid explanation, transparent atmosphere and the form in repose. His action, however, is not finished. If it is impossible to affirm his direct intervention, his advice and his teaching, in to the other works at the Louvre, his influence is everywhere visible. He has formed a style, and the Valois Court will always be dependent upon his æsthetics, born of the observation and comprehension of nature.

The painted portraits and drawings of that period and the following ones bear his stamp, and the use of the word school as applied to painting was never more justified than in specifying this concise and clear harmony where the delicate pencil strokes and pliant modellings of the painting have firmly fixed so many forms of the human enigma : brutal or cunning mouths, vague, wandering, or sharp and fine eyes, delicate nerves, flaccid flesh, sanguineous affluxes. Here we have, in a rich and mellow painting, with something of a Venitian warmth : Francis, Duke of Guise, the adventurous captain zealous for royalty, whose destiny was cut short by the pistol of Poltrot de Méré ; Gaspar de Coligny, Admiral of France, great statesman, firm justiciary, with his serious and honest face, assassinated on August 25, 1572 ; Francis, Duke of Alençon, budding into youth ; Charles de Cossé, Duke of Brissac, future Marshal of France, lively, thoughtless, open-hearted ; James Berthaut, Comptroller of the King's household, with his fine features ; Louis de Saint Gelais, knight of honour to Queen Catherine of Medici, Superintendent of her household, captain of the King's household, concealing with difficulty beneath his blond beard and cold blue eye his character of scoffer and great talker; William, Baron of Montmorency, knight of honour to Louisa of Savoy, exhibiting his bonny yellow face, and hard and well-shaped hands ; John, Duke of Albon, Seignior of Saint Andrews, Governor of the Bourbonnais province, showing a frank, healthy countenance beneath his gray locks and black cap in this presumed portrait, and if there be a doubt as to his personality, there is a supposition that the artist who painted it is Corneille of Lyons, because he had a fondness for these green grounds and often painted these rosy lights, and gray and almost bluish shades. Louise of Rieux, Marchioness of Elbeuf, thick-set, low-necked, with red hair, is probably a work by the same artist ; John, Duke of Bourbon-Vendôme, Count of Enghien, in cap and travelling costume, young, robust and painted in pastel tones, had the honour of once figuring in the collection of M. Ingres, who discovered his ancestors in these artists fascinated with the beauty of truthfulness. An unknown, whom the compiler of the catalogue supposes to have been painted by the same hand as the Cossé-Brissac, bears as an inscription the name of Francis I., but there is here a difficult problem to resolve, none of the features of this physiognomy suggesting the King with the characteristic large nose and small, contracted eyes ; finally, to close the list of paintings considered as original works, the portrait of Diana of France, Duchess of Angoulême, natural and legitimated daughter of Henry II., and the portrait of Charles of Savigny, the Duke of Mayenne's lieutenant. The copies are : the portraits of Michael de l'Hospital, John Babou de la Bourdaisière, Nicolas of Neuville, Catherine of Medici, Sylvia Pic de la Mirandole, an Unknown Man, and Claudia of Beaune. This last portrait is remarkable, very expressive with its large eyes, its frigid aspect and concealed passion, and if it be a copy is certainly the

J. Cousin.

The Last Judgment (Fragment).

reproduction of a very finely-characterised work. The kneeling *Abbess* is, by her costume, her golden crosier and escutcheon, a documentary work, but the painting, compared with the preceding portraits, is feeble and the drawing fragmentary.

It is also a documentary interest that is offered by the *Ball at the Court of Henry III.*, with the King and his mother, Catherine, the musicians, little dogs and extravagant costumes of the women. The *Ball Given at the Court of Henry III. on the Occasion of the Marriage of Anne, Duke of Joyeuse, with Margaret of Lorraine*, is the same imagery; however, plump Queen Margot, seen at the left, by the side of Henry, Duke of Guise, reveals her temperament and adventures, and Henry III. among these

same candid physiognomies is of a sufficiently intelligent trickery. He is more sedate and frightful in a small painting of the end of the sixteenth century, where he is shown in a red robe and green cloak, and with a collar of a Knight of the Holy Ghost, kneeling beside the cross. Finally, an unknown artist has left a very excellent portrait of him, which may be seen hung at the top of the wall, near the ceiling, against which it seems to whirl like a moth; he wears a small cloak that gives a winged appearance to his long, black, insect-like body, and the painting, quite different from the Clouets' work, done in full light, gives by its phantasmagoria of shades, the exact historical representation of this shivering, satyric, malicious being, clever in heroic effects, old at the beginning of his youth, who passes through history with his favourites, jesters, confessors and hired ruffians as a grotesque per-

sonage, hating the light of day, greased and perfumed with ointments, a sort of tragical harlequin having a sword as a staff.

We have now reached a period where there are no more fixed points, so to speak, in the history of French art, which will soon be given over, like Italian art, under the pretence of schooling, to all sorts of barbarisms, and under pretext of teaching, to all the passionless frenzy of pedantry. The great artists of the Italian Renascence understood the lesson taught by regained antiquity, they knew how to see that Greek art owed its force to the observation of nature. They, also, questioned life upon its secrets, and expressed directly their sensation, their knowledge and their ideal of truth. After this plenitude of thought and action a decadence was fatal. The generations that followed found themselves powerless to continue such a work. Various causes bring about fatigue, satiety and ignorance; pretension alone commands. The impossibility of creating gives rise to an increase of demonstrations and judgments. There is a halt instead of an onward march. The traditions are no longer followed, but imitated, weakened and corrupted. What was a beauty of nature becomes insipid; what was discovered becomes style. With the disappearance of a healthy state, sickness implants itself and obstinately persists.

It is thus that the full and living forms, the movements of delicate, nervous life and the numberless shades of expression lose their stimulating meaning and become simple models for reproduction. Now this reproduction is impossible. The vulgarity attached to it remains vulgarity. The only result is that all the aspects which are eloquent by their grandeur, grace and rhythm, become changed into drawing models, into collections of lines that engender nothing but exaggerations, weaknesses, turgidness and platitudes. Greece and Italy are at last obliterated and counterfeited, and every new comer will be obliged to display a strong effort to discover these two great countries, which are now buried under the mass of conventions that disfigure and conceal them. Falsehood has been organised in such an extraordinary manner that it still remains to-day, and we are compelled to take off the masks and disguises of official art and academical comments in order again to find the first freshness, the inexpressible charm and the touching visage of sincere beauty.

Under all these influences a change is made in the direction of French painting, or rather one of the forms adopted takes precedence, and the naturalist art of the Clouets gives way to the arrangement of more or less learned, more or less happily invented compositions, and to quite another decorative development that will put the complication of arabesques and the often hollow pomp of allegories in the place of spectacles directly felt and truthfully expressed. The history of this art, which will have its evolution in the course of the seventeenth century, begins here, in the sixteenth century, by the vulgar imitation of Italian artists, who themselves preserved their genius in their curious works at Fontainebleau.

But before calling attention to the few pieces at the Louvre which give us information about this error and eclipse of our art, we must name the illustrious artist, represented by a single work, who indicates the precise moment when this evolution was decided: John Cousin, and his *Last Judgment*. Painter, glass-painter, decorator, sculptor (the admirable statue of Admiral Chabot is definitely admitted to be his work), architect, miniaturist, etcher and wood-engraver, illustrator and writer upon his art in the "Book of Perspective" and the "Real Science of Portraiture," John Cousin is certainly one of the greatest figures of the French Renascence, and it is not simply his *Last Judgment* that serves to give him his rank. To confine ourselves to judging even the painter, we should need to make a comparison with the *Pandora*, the *Artemisia* and the family portraits that are justly attributed to him. If we speak only of the work at the Louvre, which is far from being a summing-up of his immense labour, we can simply call attention to the well-balanced science of the

M. Fréminet.

Mercury Ordering Æneas to Abandon Dido.

whole composition—the anatomical surety of all the superior and inferior bodies that writhe in this narrow space, hollowed out by the perspective, and enlarged by the science of arrangement and skilful filling.

There is here only the rough outline, and we have lost the most unexpected, and perhaps the most touching, of the decorative works of ancient France, this *Last Judgment* conceived before Michael Angelo's work; but we cannot help admiring these spectres in space, the flight of these cherubins, the swarming of these damned, the varieties of punishment and the brilliant and fantastical apparitions of regularly erected palaces and burning ruins. What impresses us is to divine that a supreme battle was raised in John Cousin's breast. What strikes us is the visible avowal of the style learned in Italy, the fixed resolution of lengthening the personages, the cold and insipid expression of the angels. What disturbs us is the future announced by this work, where the emotion of the real already yields to the intervention of the factitious.

The works directly drawn from nature are to become more and more rare. Nicolo dell'Abbate, Rosso, and Primaticcio were great painters, but what a lot of feeble and agitated artists are to follow them, and how the discoveries of an almost veritable beauty are to become precious in the general perversion, after these grand epochs, the history of which we have indicated by the aid of the works at the Louvre. I must admit that I still admire this *Diana,* blond and long, of the Fontainebleau School, a visible study from life, as is proved by so many details and by a sort of embarrassment before the painting of this nude woman, with her high-placed breasts and strong attachments of the members; perhaps it is Diana of Poitiers, who replies to the sarcasms by thus exhibiting her tall, robust, and always young body. I also admire among the vases, helmets and fasces of *Scipio's*

Chastity, the milky-white veiled woman in whom there is a sort of presentiment of the graces of the eighteenth century and the living pallors of Fragonard. But the *Chariclea* and the *Clorinda*, by the Antwerp painter, Ambroise Dubois, petted by Henry IV., and who has not been dislodged from the French School since the time when he covered the walls at Fontainebleau with his paintings; the *Dido* of Martin Freminet, who brought back all the methods of the Italian decadence to Fontainebleau, in the midst of this admirable nature that the blind painters did not even perceive; really, this is the too painful conclusion of the splendid history that goes from the unknown artists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to the encyclopædical John Cousin, who rises in the glory of artists like John Fouquet, who himself assimilated the fine Italian force without losing the character of his race or his individual will; and like the Clouets, who start from the precision and delicacy of the Flamands, living at the Court of France in the peaceful pursuit of their profession, regarding, observing and becoming savants, and remain simple in the redoubtable function of judges of their models and historians of France.

GUSTAVE GEFFROY.

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Anne of France, Duchess of Bourbon, Dame of Beaujeu,
Daughter of Louis XI.

Negative by Braun, Clement & Cie

Fontainebleau School (Sixteenth Century).

Diana.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

Fontainebleau School (Sixteenth Century).

Scipio's Chastity.

Negative by Braun, Clement & Cie

French School (Sixteenth Century)

Portrait of Henry III.

Negative by Braun, Clément & Cie

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